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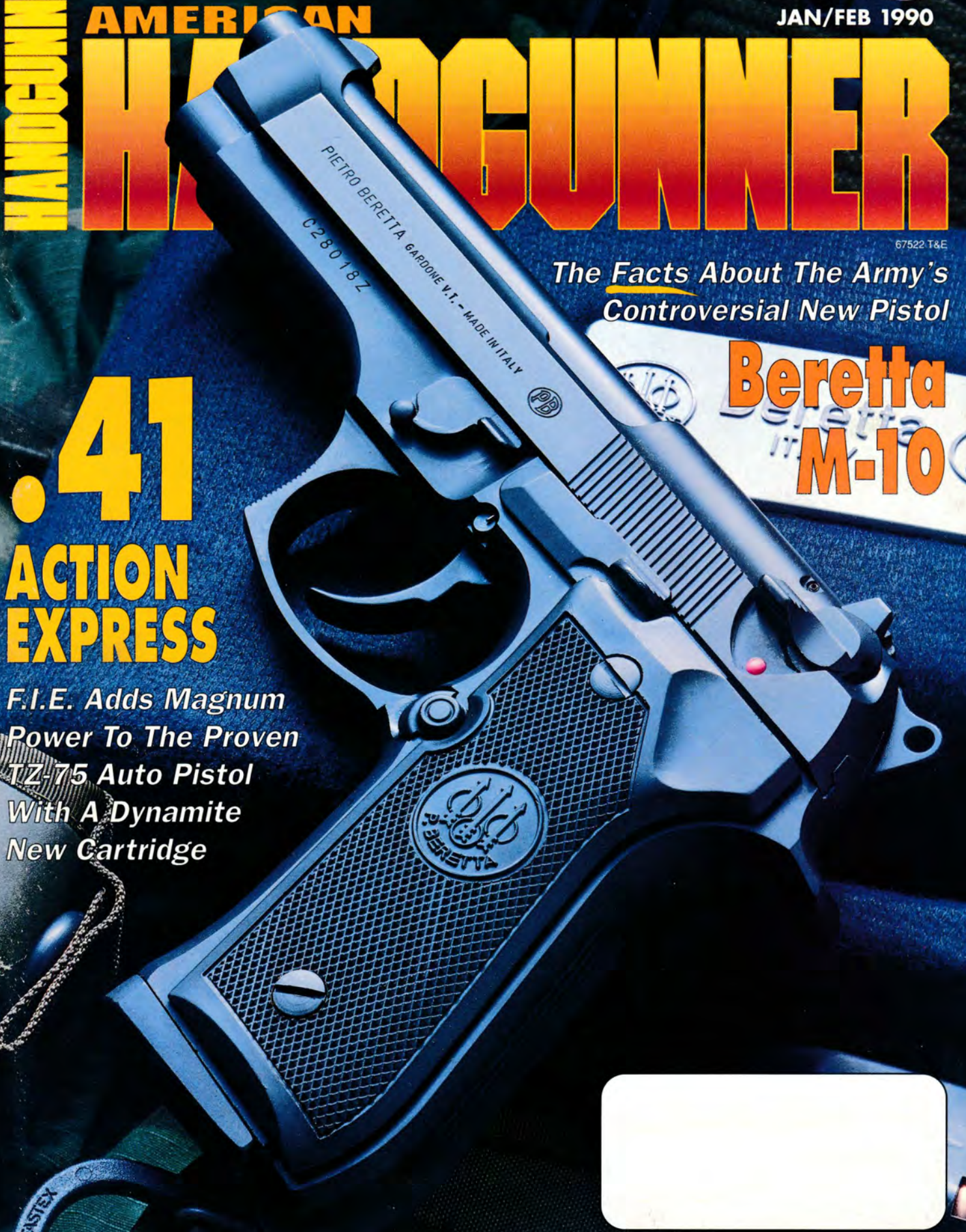
67522 T&E

*The Facts About The Army's
Controversial New Pistol*

**Beretta
M-10**

**.41
ACTION
EXPRESS**

*F.I.E. Adds Magnum
Power To The Proven
TZ-75 Auto Pistol
With A Dynamite
New Cartridge*





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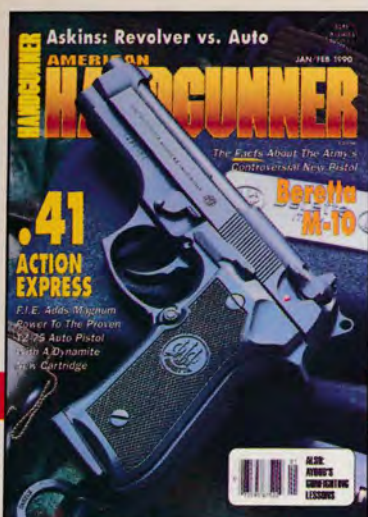
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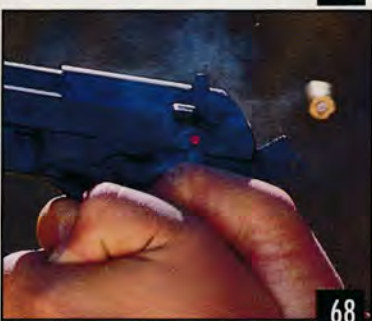
Beretta's new M-10 pistol adopted by the US Armed Forces to replace the 1911 Government Model .45. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.



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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1990

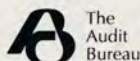
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Shop Around & Call Us Last

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General Dwight D. Eisenhower,
6 June 1944

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This is one of the most restricted edition limits ever issued and certainly one of the—if not the—rarest .45s ever created, your assurance of immediate collector and historical value. Each firearm in the edition is serially numbered from 0001 to 1000, with the prefix "DDAY" as a part of the serial number.

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This is a museum-quality limited edition of historic significance. The slide and frame are mirror-polished and blued. Deeply etched across the presentation side are historical inscriptions flanked by scrolls reminiscent of the high rolling seas of 6 June 1944. These etchings are gold-gilt in-filled in dramatic contrast. Ten components are

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shown smaller than actual size.

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SPEAK OUT

The Russians Are Coming, The Russians Are Coming

Has anyone noticed how rapidly the "orchestrated" assault ban swept the country? The media and certain politicians across the national scene had it all in a package almost overnight.

The assault ban package was being prepared and coordinated as far back as two years ago, including the media.

Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D., Ohio), who has spearheaded the anti-gun forces on capitol hill, is a member of the National Lawyers Guild, a communist front group.

According to Guild vice president John Quigley, "As an anti-imperialist organization, its (the Guild's) aim is to aid national struggles and to defeat the ruling in this country."

Metzenbaum is sure trying to do his share via gun control.

Yes, we have others on capitol hill who are in congress and the senate and are dedicated to communism. Rep. Crockett (D., Mich.) has been a longtime communist since the early Fifties. Sen.

Alan Cranston (D., Calif.), John Conyers (D., Mich.) and Ron Dellums (D., Calif.) are fellow travellers.

Yes, and there are more on the scene in congress. They are in a conspiracy to disarm the masses of the United States, for obvious reasons.

Much of the above information was obtained from "The McAluany Intelligence Advisor" of Phoenix, Ariz. and "The Spotlight" of Washington, DC.

Walter Nimmo
Las Vegas, Nev.

Libertarians Are Pro-Gun

While both Democrats and Republicans are flip-flopping on the gun issue, Libertarians are the only ones adamantly on our side. Probably you should consider giving them a free page in each issue of your magazine.

This would accelerate the formation of the "Third Party" and would send a strong message to both Democrats and Republicans.

Guisepppe Bonomi
Houston, Texas

Pen Pal Wanted

Let me start off by saying that I think *American Handgunner* is the best handgun publication in the world.

I live in South Africa and enjoy every issue of *American Handgunner*. Well, I don't want to take up too much of your time, so I'll get to the point. I would very much like to correspond with American hunters and gun nuts like myself.

I hope that I will hear from you as soon as possible. Thank you for taking the time and effort.

Gerrit Steyn

P.O. Box 1665

Springs 1560

Republic of South Africa

Versatile RCBS Die

Just a quick note on John Taffin's *Taffin Tests* on the .45 Auto Rim (Sept/Oct '89). Mr. Taffin states that to properly roll crimp the .45 AR, you'll need a .45 AR seat/crimp die.

However, a look in my RCBS .45 ACP seat die shows a crimping shoulder. A test run of .45 AR rounds shows that it works quite well.

A visit to Mack's Sport Shop here in Kodiak revealed that all RCBS seat dies have this feature. It seems somebody was thinking ahead down in Oroville when this die was designed.

Just add an inexpensive shell holder

Introducing the ultimate refinement of the .380 pistol.

These new Beretta "F" Frame pistols look for all the world like their big brother, the legendary 92F...and include many of the same features. Like open slide design, double action with firing pin block, a new combat style light alloy frame and Beretta's sleek, matte black Brunton[®] finish.

Unlike some of today's midget .380's, Beretta "F" Frames fill the hand comfortably for superior control and accuracy. The new frame design features a recurved trigger guard for a sure two hand grip, and a special new safety decocking lever. All this with your choice of 8 or 13-round firepower. In fact, the Model 84F has the largest magazine capacity of any .380 pistol currently available.

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Made in America of 100% leather, it has a nylon holster that allows for easy access via a hidden opening—no flaps or zippers to fumble with here.

And, if you simply must have a more appropriate style for evenings, or just prefer a clutch, we offer the *Carry Case*. Your handgun is secured to a wriststrap which draws through a tear-away side. So even if your purse is snatched, you'll still be left with your gun to protect you.

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(#8) and you're all set.

Thanks, RCBS. And thank you, John Taffin, for the good data on a neglected member of the .45 caliber family.

Karl E. Berggren
Kodiak, Alaska

A Pastor's Perspective

Traditionally, Christianity in America has taught us that to own and learn to use a gun is wrong and sinful. This is incorrect.

In Luke 22:36, Jesus commanded his disciples to buy a "sword" and if you cannot afford one, "sell your cloak and purchase one."

Now many spineless cowards (pastors, theologians, televangelists, etc.) will claim that in the aforementioned verse, Jesus meant to purchase a Bible, not an actual sword. This statement is what manure is made from! In 33 AD, there were no completed Bibles and no Bibles were to be printed and bound for approximately 15 centuries.

Jesus Christ clearly told his disciples to own a "sword" for self-defense *when* "turning the other cheek" and reasoning does not work against the attacker!

Well, in 33 AD Jerusalem, a sword was the state-of-the-art in self-defense and today it is a gun. Yet today, as technology produces better weapons (Glocks, AR-15s, Uzi's, etc.), we must arm ourselves accordingly to counter effectively the advanced weapons of the criminal element.

To own a gun and learn how to shoot is not a "lack of faith." Today America is faced with Godless enemies who put the same value on human life as a fast-food package. It is time that we wake up, and fast, before the eagle is replaced with a red star and sickle. Before our Bibles are lit aflame and our constitutional rights something out of ancient history.

How true the old statement, "The only thing worse (more evil) than lawbreakers are *lawmakers*."

Pastor Henry Walther
Philadelphia, Penn.

Death By Stepladder

On October 2, 1989, Stephanie Ramos, manager of a retail store in Newbury Park, Calif., was brutally attacked and beaten to death in her store by a "transient" wielding a stepladder.

I am waiting for our stalwart legislators in Sacramento, specifically those two defenders of Citizens In Spite Of Themselves, Reps. Roberti and Roos, to draft legislation which would outlaw "assault ladders."

Clearly the dangers of assault ladders

Continued on page 12

SPIRIT OF THE SIOUX



A Masterpiece In Porcelain Sculpture Created For America's Indian Museum.

In a ritual older than time, the Sioux medicine man begins his mystic chant. Dancing in the light of the dawn—in union with the spirit of the eagle.

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This original work of art is so superbly sculptured, you can count all 51 feathers on the Indian's headdress. And feel the intensity in the medicine man's eyes. Captured in fine porcelain and hand-painted in all his glorious colors. And signed and dated by the artist.

Shown smaller than actual size of 12" high including hardwood base.

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Continued from page 10

outweigh their legitimate sporting purpose.

The only thing that would have saved Stephanie Ramos is if she had exercised her Second Amendment rights and kept a defensive firearm at her store.

I hope that other decent, law abiding citizens can learn from Miss Ramos' tragic death—buy a gun, join the NRA! The NRA defends the right of honest citizens to keep and bear arms and works for stricter punishments for criminals.

Oh yes, one last thing: let's send this "transient" Rossano Barin Santonil to the gas chamber as quickly as possible.

Timothy Curtiss
Ventura, Calif.

Madder Than Hell

I am writing about one of your ads in *American Handgunner* (Nov/Dec 1989) using a picture of a semi-nude woman to sell gun care products. I find it obnoxious, offensive and degrading.

It also makes me madder than hell. It's also irresponsible.

You have a pretty good, responsible magazine with good articles on responsible use of firearms. In this same issue, you even have an article on the .38 Special "LadySmith" for use by women for protection.

You also have good coverage of matches with women participating. You have other ads showing women as real people, not sex objects.

On the one hand, you encourage women to protect themselves, then you turn around and show them as objects of exploitation. Clean up your act!

Stop using ads that connect sex with guns. And stop exploiting women as objects of this stupidity. You have control over your ads and what they look like. You can set criteria. Please do so responsibly.

My husband and I both read and enjoy your magazine. We are both shooters ourselves and hunters. Joe is the one who brought the ad to my attention (he got the magazine first) and said he was writing to you because he found that ad highly offensive.

One thing for sure, we will not be using that ad's product. If that type of ad continues to show up in your magazine, we may not be reading it either.

Ellen Galligan
Big Timber, Mont.

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VIDEO REVIEW

Fast and Fancy Shooters, starring Ed McGivern, Bill Jordan, Herb Parsons; produced by Col. Rex Applegate; 75 minutes; VHS; color and B&W.

To paraphrase Crocodile Dundee, "Now *this* is a video!" The most entertaining and informative shooting video this reviewer has ever had the pleasure to critique, *Fast and Fancy Shooters* is a fascinating look back at the bygone days of exhibition shooting by the greatest handgunners, riflemen and shotgunners of all time.

The highlight of the 75 minute video is never-before-seen footage of the famous Ed McGivern performing some amazing tricks with his double-action Smith & Wesson revolvers. The black and white film of McGivern shows him



The legendary Ed McGivern displays his phenomenal speed shooting with a revolver in "Fast and Fancy" video.

firing his revolver so fast that even the slo-mo feature of the video player has trouble capturing the speed of this phenomenal handgunner.

You'll see McGivern fire his Smith at the unbelievable rate of 600 rounds per minute, which works out to 10 shots a second or the six-shot contents of his cylinder in an amazing six-tenths of a second! This sort of speed shooting has to be seen to be appreciated!

But there's more to this historical look at exhibition shooting than just handguns.

Marvel at Winchester's showman shooter Herb Parsons as he fires a pump-action .22 rifle at his own empty cases flying from the gun. Herb first fires at one aerial target and then pumps the little rimfire rifle in such a manner as to eject the tiny hull from the gun. Then he hits it in mid-air! He pumps and hits the flying brass just as fast as the gun cycles!

Ad Topperwein is another exhibition shooter who demonstrates simply uncanny gun handling and aerial shooting. There's the entire Remington team of trick shooters who dazzle and amaze with such tricks as shooting accurately by aiming through a mirror, hitting multiple aerial targets and shooting upside down.

Legendary lawman Bill Jordan is featured in a vintage film made by the NRA. Watch the "fast man with the slow draw" draw and hip-shoot an aspirin tablet! See for yourself as he begins his draw with a ping pong ball on the back of his hand and then whips the gun from his Border Patrol holster and shoots the ping pong ball before it hits the ground.

This incredible shooting video is assembled from the collection of historical film footage of another legendary shooter himself, Col. Rex Applegate. You'll see some of Col. Applegate's extensive collection of rare and historic handguns in the opening of this video.

The narrator of *Fast and Fancy Shooters* explains that it wasn't all that long ago that a shooting exhibition was an extremely popular spectator event drawing families for an enjoyable Sunday afternoon of recreation. Kids would aspire to be fast and fancy shooters like men such as Gus Peret, Herb Parsons, Ed McGivern and Bill Jordan.

Sadly, today the shooting sports and the recreational use of firearms have somehow become tainted in the eyes of the public.

But the glorious days when guns were unquestionably respectable and when a shooting gallery was the most popular attraction at the county fair are preserved in this fascinating look at the greatest showmen-shooters of all time.

Fast and Fancy Shooters is available only on VHS format for \$59.95 postpaid from: Wells Creek Knife and Gun Works, Dept. AH, 32956 State Hwy. 38, Scottsburg, OR 97473.

Cameron Hopkins

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TELEVISION PROPAGANDA TWISTS FACTS ABOUT GUN OWNER RIGHTS

Television news and entertainment programming is aiming to undermine your right to own firearms. If you don't believe that, you must live in a hut in the Himalayas, or be one of the handful of Americans without access to TV.

Television's hit list strikes close to home for those of us who have guns. Hunting, for one, draws the medium's ire. Handguns for sport or self-defense? Our self-imposed network censors say it's a sin.

Long guns, short guns, semiautos—few if any tools of the shooting sports escape their condemnation nowadays.

Our constitutionally protected rights have been judged immoral by media critics who can't even keep their own house in order. Their simple-minded attacks would be easy to shrug off, except for one thing: These messages enter millions of American homes.

Too many gun owners fail to realize

that a vast segment of our population accepts TV promoted anti-gun propaganda as the gospel. These people don't own guns, don't know anything about guns and are therefore easily upset by the scare and hate tactics presented by TV.

Furthermore, they vote. You can bet your favorite target pistol that anti-gun legislators joyfully endorse TV's anti-gun attacks. We firearms owners are approximately 70 million strong, but is that enough?

Anti-gun news programming and anti-gun slurs injected into prime time entertainment are worth millions, even billions of dollars in free advertising. Groups like the Coalition to Ban Handguns and Handgun Control, Inc. reap these free benefits while law-abiding gun owners lose.

We can counter with our own ads, if and when we can find networks willing to accept them. And then we must pay through the nose for these little scraps of time.

Yet Dan Rather can appear before a huge cross section of the prime time public and degrade our rights without batting an eye. Ethically, he shouldn't. Nor should a TV series script writer literally hurl darts at the NRA.

But in the heat of the ongoing gun fracas, ethics have been flung out the window. Somehow, we have to fight back.

Pro-Second Amendment groups including the NRA are taking the media to task. And, if necessary, we will take them to court. But litigation is an agonizingly slow process and time is the one thing we can't afford to give away.

So what are our options? The Constitution should not be undermined by faddist philosophy shared by a handful of media elite. We've attempted to reason with these people, but they won't be persuaded. In fact, they won't even listen. Yet they do have an Achilles' heel.

Start tugging at their purse strings and you'll get a response. No network programming exists without sponsorship. A threatened boycott of these advertisers will bring the most adamant anti-gun media types to the negotiating table.

Here's what you can do. If you witness anti-gun programming, jot down the time, the date, the station, the network and the names of advertisers. You might also note the particulars of the contents you found offensive.

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al Rifle Association, Institute for Legislative Action, 1600 Rhode Island Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. We'd love to have a tape of the anti-gun segment if you can capture it on video.

Thus armed, we'll appeal directly to the sponsors. Because of the intricate nature of purchasing TV commercial time, oftentimes these companies are not aware they are promoting anti-gun messages. We will make them aware.

No corporation in its right mind wants to offend 70 million Americans who not only own guns, but who also consume a goodly portion of the products advertised on TV. These frivolous attacks on legal firearms ownership will dry up like a desert in August under the threat of economic reprisal.

**Join the NRA today
and help fight the
anti-gunners!**

**Tell a friend
and spread the word,
the guns you save
may be your own!**

With your help we can protect the Constitution and your individual rights as gun owners. But if we do not work together in blocking this threat, it is possible that TV's anti-gun crusade will begin to carry more weight than we can counter.

Time is of essence here, for the attacks grow more vicious every day. It's up to us to make the media responsible again—not to just a few arrogant friends who share their fashionable philosophy, but to all of us out here who still belong to the American mainstream.



Wayne LaPierre is a hunter, shooter and Director of 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*.

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RUNNING GUNFIGHT: THE CONNECTICUT STATE POLICE INCIDENT

Situation: An escaped murderer cuts loose with full-auto fire from his getaway car in a racing gunfight.

Lesson: A combination of guts, coordination and firepower wins the day for state police.

Sunday, August 5, 1984. Few of the citizens in the quiet town of Somers, Conn. have any inkling that extremely dangerous hardened felons are inside their boundaries, but those who do know are doing something about it. The Connecticut State Police (CSP) have received an extremely reliable tip that three particularly vicious fugitives are en route to the area. A relative of one of the criminals has given them the warning, and they are taking full advantage of it.

CSP has set up a command post in the town, starting at 10 a.m. Fifteen state police cruisers have been arrayed through the township, creating a screen that they hope will net the wanted men. K-9 units and SWAT teams are on standby.

Their quarry has been at large for a month, a trio of hardened cons in their late twenties to early thirties. They escaped July 1 from a state penitentiary in Only, Tenn. One convicted murderer had been captured during what was initially a four-man breakout, but three have gotten away. They have sworn to their cohorts that they will not be taken alive. Three lawmen have already died in the fiery crash of a helicopter that was searching for the convicts.

Michael Hartsock, 26, is a drug-gobbling double murderer who stabbed a man and a woman to death with an ice pick after they panicked while he was burglarizing their home. William Prentice, serving 30 years for armed robbery, once shot a policeman with his own service revolver but was able to plea-bargain his way out of the attempted murder conviction he had deserved. Lohman Mays, Prentice's prison lover, had a long history of attempted murder including the shooting of a law enforcement officer.

They weren't coming to Somers to visit. Police would later learn that Prentice had come with the intention of murdering a specific individual, and that Hartsock was there to "watch his back" during the killing. Mays had apparently bowed out of the plan.

Early warning notwithstanding, the Connecticut police were at a certain disadvantage. Their information had led them to be looking for three Caucasians in a blue pickup truck. In fact, their number had dwindled to two, and they had recently stolen new wheels, a '78 Ford Bronco, red over white.

While they considered the fugitives armed and dangerous, they also had no idea yet just how dangerous. In the past 35 days, the escapees had been roaming the eastern US, robbing banks from South Carolina to Vermont at \$16,000 to \$30,000 a crack, stealing cars and trucks, and burglarizing homes for jewelry and guns.

They had built an impressive arsenal. Cached in the woods were an AR-15 and, supposedly, an M-16. Other guns they'd stolen ranged from a 4" Colt Python .357 Magnum to a Weatherby Vanguard .25-06 rifle.

Staying off the beaten path had kept them out of police hands so far, and the two escaped felons were prepared for long periods in the woods. The back of the Bronco

was filled with camping gear, food and plenty of ammo.

Armed And Dangerous

They were, of course, armed. The vehicle contained a Universal .30 caliber M-1 carbine, fully loaded with a 30-shot banana clip and converted to fire full-auto like an M-2. Next to it in the back seat of the Bronco was a Heckler and Koch HK-91 semiautomatic.

Though there were boxes of .308 hunting ammo for the latter in the car—Federal Hi-Shok and Federal Premium—the gunmen were apparently prepared to shoot it out with police cars in pursuit; the rifle was loaded with full metal jacket GI ammo, by Lake City Arsenal, which would give much greater penetration.

Each also had a semi-automatic pistol at hand. Hartsock had apparently liked the compactness of a Savage .32 automatic they'd stolen, old and semi-rare enough to be a collector's item but in full working condition. He carried it loaded with Winchester ball ammo, and they'd even stolen a cheap suede-out inside the waistband holster that would fit it.

Prentice carried heavier firepower. The stolen gun he'd kept for his own was a Smith & Wesson Model 59, 15-shot 9mm. The blue steel autoloader rode on his left hip, butt forward, snapped inside the belt in a Bianchi #3 Pistol Pocket from which the thumb-break safety strap had been sliced away.

The troopers, however, were not without their own firepower. In 1983, Connecticut had become the second State Police agency in the nation to adopt the semi-automatic service pistol to replace the traditional revolver. Like Illinois State Police before them, they'd gone with the 9mm Parabellum caliber, but unlike ISP with their single-stack S&W 39s, Connecticut had chosen the Beretta Model 92 SB, whose double-stack magazine afforded each trooper a 15-shot ammo reservoir with a sixteenth round in the chamber. The spare magazines issued amplified their firepower still further.

Several cruisers also contained shotguns and at least one, that of Sgt. Walter Nielowocki, held a privately owned, department approved Colt AR-15, the short CAR-15 version with telescoping stock, equipped with an Aimpoint electronic sight. The semi-automatic rifle's curved magazine held 28 rounds of high velocity .223 ammunition.

The stage was set. The police did not have long to wait.

Felony Hot-Stop

At a half hour past noon, a red and white Bronco pulled to a halt on Route 83 in Somers, across the road from the cruiser of Trooper David Waddell. Connecticut SP pioneered the concept of patrol units with removable light racks that could instantly be rendered "unmarked



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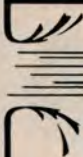
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cars," and Waddell was driving such a Ford Crown Victoria. Still, the searchlight on the side of the door would clearly mark it to any knowing eye as a police vehicle, and if that were not enough, Waddell was in full uniform.

But convicted murderer Michael Hartsock was either very brazen or very stupid. He stepped out of the passenger side and approached the trooper. "Can you direct me to Schneider Road," he asked in a polite drawl.

The trooper told him where the road was, and the red-bearded man thanked him and returned to the Bronco. As the car pulled out, Waddell reached for his radio mike. The informant had warned the police to look for a blue pickup with three men, but the suspect's description, coupled with the southern accent, couldn't be coincidental.

In moments he had alerted the other troopers, and Waddell spun his own cruiser in a U-turn heading for Schneider Road.

Prentice had apparently been aware that the trooper might be alert enough to discreetly follow him. The lawmen didn't find the Bronco on Schneider Road because the escaped felon had turned instead onto nearby Kibbe Grove Road.

But it was a short-term refuge. Waddell himself turned next onto the same road, and spotted the Bronco at about the same time as two of the brother troopers he had alerted over the air.

Westbound, Waddell gunned his cruiser toward the fugitive vehicle, and Trooper Nick Longo fell in behind him. Trooper Stephen Marshall closed in from the west to seal off the escape route. Trooper Charles Vanderscoff was also approaching rapidly from the east to back up his brother officers.

Prentice, suddenly realizing that he was about to be boxed in, pulled the Bronco off the road and into an unpaved parking area near a barn at the side of the road. Waddell swung in behind him, angling his cruiser to block any escape. As the trooper reached for his shotgun, he saw the cruisers of the two nearest back-ups, Marshall and Longo, pull in on either side to take support positions. Waddell stepped out of the vehicle ... and saw the blue-steel snout of a semi-automatic pistol emerge from the driver's window.

Fire Fight

William Prentice began shooting.

The 9mm fire missed Waddell, who dove back through his open door into the front seat of his cruiser for cover. He glanced up and saw the Bronco moving toward his cruiser, as if to slide around it to escape, and Waddell threw the police car into gear and tried to block the Bronco.

But, unable to get himself properly positioned behind the wheel, he lost control and the police Ford's left side

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slammed into a flatbed trailer truck parked in the dirt area, jamming the driver's door as the Bronco roared past.

Trooper Marshall wasn't in position to return fire, but Trooper Longo was. As Marshall saw the second fugitive join in the barrage aimed at Waddell and Longo, he saw the latter's Beretta come up and bark in response.

Longo fired three Winchester Silver-tips at the Bronco before it went past him, and as it did so, he jumped into the roadway and fired 10 more at the disappearing vehicle. But the Bronco had swerved off the right side of the road for a moment, kicking up a plume of dust that obscured the trooper's aim, and then Marshall's cruiser swept past him in pursuit and Longo no longer dared fire.

Waddell had by now climbed out through the right front door of his wrecked cruiser. He jumped into Longo's and the two joined the chase along with Trooper Vanderscoff. Marshall was leading the pursuit.

The rest of the hastily-assembled task force was already in action. A roadblock was set up in the anticipated direction of travel, on Route 83 beyond Northwest Drive.

Prentice wheeled the Bronco off Kibbe Grove Road and onto Route 83 South just as Trooper Mike Hesnan was approaching the curve. Hesnan—who had been detailed to pick up a pair of .308 rifles, a shotgun, and heavy body armor—recognized the vehicle and swung his own car into a U-turn, joining the pursuit.

Behind Hesnan's cruiser was that of Sgt. Nielowocki. Beside him was the local constable, Officer Edwin Lee. Knowing Lee to be an excellent marksman, Nielowocki told him to grab the AR-15 and be ready.

Automatic Fire!

The pursuit was about to turn into a running gun battle.

As Prentice drove the Bronco desperately and recklessly, swerving back and forth on the narrow road at two to three times the speed limit, the killer Hartsock crouched in the front passenger seat where he could reach the rifles.

With rear window down, he aimed out the back and fired. Inside the vehicle, the concussion must have been deafening. The gunman's own bullets tore out the inside window moldings of the Bronco as he fired at the troopers, alternating between the high-powered HK 91 and the stolen .30 machinegun.

A .308 slug shattered the windshield of the lead cruiser, Marshall's. The bullet was homing on a direct line for his head, but the convexity of the windshield deflected the spire-point, copper jacketed slug and drove it into the door molding above his head.

But the spall, or glass fragments,



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sprayed Marshall's face like a stinging slap, and he swerved off the road into a cornfield. By the time he was back on the road, he was bringing up the rear.

By now, Hartsock had unlimbered the machinegun. The warning cry, "Automatic fire! Automatic fire!" blurted over the radio. The cruisers swerved violently, trying to avoid the bullets.

Hesnan's car was hit twice, and he too was sprayed with flying glass.

Prentice and Hartsock had no such concerns about bystander safety. Their bullets raked three passenger cars. Inside one, a young girl screamed.

The Ford Escort in which Michelle Chagnon, 14, had been riding with her mother, had passed the pursuit going northbound. One of Hartsock's bullets had missed the state police car he was aiming at and entered the back of hers instead.

The sergeant grabbed his AR while the constable unholstered his handgun. The murderer was still armed with his 9mm. He was still deadly. As the troopers saw him move, the firefight resumed instantly.

Yet none of the troopers returned fire. It was bad enough that at speeds of 75 miles an hour on a 25 to 35 mph speed limit road, civilian traffic was being endangered; they were also entering a residential area, and did not dare to add to the general jeopardy by unleashing gunfire of their own. As one local reporter put it, the cops were driving straight into the mouth of hell—but they kept going.

The bullet had smashed into the girl's arm, leaving a .30 caliber wound on entry in the triceps and a nasty exit wound the size of a tennis ball in the biceps, spraying chunks of blown-away flesh across the front seat as the bullet finally slammed into the dashboard. Michelle would require many days of hospitalization and considerable corrective surgery for this severe wound.

Cops Return Fire

The Bronco was now approaching the hastily erected roadblock. But the escapees had good instincts for such things. Shortly before the police barricade would have been visible, Prentice suddenly swung the speeding Bronco onto a sidestreet, Northwest Drive.

Nieliwocki's was now the closest vehicle. Hesnan and Vanderscoff had both been slowed by citizen's cars that had swerved in front of them, trying desperately to evade the gunfire of the fleeing criminals.

But right behind the sergeant's car was that of Trooper Marshall, his face still burning from the shattered glass in his right eye. Being farther back when he saw the Bronco's turn, Marshall had more reaction time, and was able to cut the corner by driving through an open lot. He was now the lead chase car, with Nieliwocki close behind him.

The Universal converted machinegun had jammed. As the killer struggled to bring his other gun to bear, he realized to his horror that they were no longer on the residential, heavily travelled road where the troopers had not dared to return fire.

He was also about to realize that in evading the roadblock, his partner had jumped from the frying pan into the fire: Northwest Drive is a dead end street, and sparsely enough populated that the troopers no longer needed to keep their own

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guns silent.

Simultaneously, the pursuing troopers opened fire with a vengeance. His vision still blurry but not so bad that he couldn't point a pistol, Marshall twisted his Beretta from the holster and, firing left handed out the window, cut loose.

At the same time, Officer Lee leaned out the side of the sergeant's car and began firing.

The volume of gunfire was intense. Since Longo's 13 9mm bullets, no shots had been returned at the gunmen, who had fired dozens of rounds at the police. But now Marshall emptied his 16-shot Beretta, and Lee was rapidly firing what would turn out to be 24 rounds from the AR-15. Through the scope, he saw one of the gunmen lurch in the front seat, as if from a bullet's impact.

Prentice had now realized that he was in a cul-de-sac and had run out of escape routes. All three vehicles were now driving on the private lawns of narrow Northwest Drive.

Prentice attempted evasive action, driving with the Smith & Wesson automatic clutched in his left hand as he tried to manipulate the steering wheel with his right. Suddenly, the troopers saw the right door of the fugitive vehicle fly open and a body drop out onto the lawn.

Michael Hartsock, his lung exploded and his abdominal viscera lacerated by a .223 bullet, sprawled prone and motionless on the lawn as his erstwhile partner kept on going.

Prentice cut right as if to make a bootlegger turn. Marshall rammed the Bronco with his cruiser, spinning it around. Both vehicles came to a dead stop a few feet from one another, and in seconds the cruisers of Nielowocki and Trooper Michael Hesnan had pulled to a stop.

The sergeant grabbed his AR while the constable beside him unholstered his handgun. Hesnan snatched his department issue Hi Standard K-1200 shotgun and bailed out of the cruiser. Marshall dumped the spent magazine from his Beretta, slammed in a fresh one, dropped the slide, and jumped from his vehicle into a standing combat position.

Prentice was still armed with the 9mm. He was still deadly. As the troopers saw him move, the firefight resumed instantly.

Marshall fired four or five shots through the door area of the Bronco. Hesnan simultaneously triggered two rounds of Western 00 buckshot into the same area, and Nielowocki put a .223 round into the one Bronco tire that didn't seem to be flattened by police bullets, and emptied the last three rounds of his magazine into the car door Prentice had just slumped behind.



The officers moved forward, guns ready. When they jerked open the door, they saw it was over. Prentice had dropped his Model 59 on the floor near the pedals and had collapsed between the

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two front seats. Blood poured from wounds in his head, neck and chest.

The gunfight was finished. The only question remaining was which had killed the gunman first: Trooper Marshall's 9mm Silvertip in his chest, or Neliwocki's .223 bullet through the head.

Gunfight Lessons

Trooper Marshall would remark later that the most stark lesson he'd learned was the value of two-man vehicles in pursuits, since no one man can drive under emergency conditions, work a radio and shoot effectively.

This was a high-volume firefight. Heavy gunfire came from the perpetrators, most of it .30 Carbine on full auto

power and rapid reloadability of the Beretta 92 SB. Marshall said flatly, "I'd never carry a six-shot revolver again."

Fans of the high capacity 9mm point to this incident as proof of that pistol's superiority for police survival. Critics point to the poor hit potential delivered by the 9mm in the running gunfight, with only one neutralizing hit delivered.

The truth, as usual, lies in the middle. No one can expect a man firing at a fleeing vehicle through a cloud of dust (Longo) to deliver a center X-hit with every shot, or a man firing one hand/weak hand, driving a vehicle at speed over a rough road, blinded by glass (Marshall) to do the same.

Consider that, with 24 of the 28 .223

nan, though centered, did not have the potency to drive through the car door effectively.

Consider the role of suppressive fire, from both the high capacity pistols and particularly the CAR-15, which also did put neutralizing rifle hits into both perpetrators. Once Longo began his 9mm barrage in the dirt parking area, there was no effective fire upon the officers at that scene.

Once Lee cut loose with the AR and Marshall did so with his Beretta on Northwest Drive the terrifying fusillades of high powered rifle fire from the Bronco ceased immediately.

Indeed, police believe that the murderer Hartsock, who until now had fired at them with impunity, was so terrified by the sudden mass return of fire that he dropped his rifles into the back seat and his .32 onto the front floor (where all were recovered), and intentionally dove out of the Bronco to escape certain death. He apparently "played possum" after leaping from the vehicle, and did not move until he knew he was "safely" under arrest.

One point missed by the newspaper reporters who covered this incident was response by armed citizens. When the chase came to its cataclysmic finale on Northwest Drive, two such men put guns in their hands and were ready to assist the police.

Arthur Lamme, a retired Hartford cop, grabbed his 2" S&W .38 Special as the running gun battle swept past his house and ran outside to assist, but saw that it was over by the time he got there.

Vietnam vet Mark Warner looked out his window when he heard the screeching tires and the shots, and saw a man firing at police with a high powered autoloading rifle from the back of a Bronco. He dropped to the floor and crawled to his bedroom to grab his 9mm semiautomatic, but by the time he had it in hand, the fast-breaking firefight was already over.

William Prentice, of course, died at the scene. Michael Hartsock was sentenced to a total of 45 years in the Connecticut prison system after his convictions for attempted murder of police officers. Those will not be applied until he has served out his two consecutive sentences for life imprisonment in the Tennessee State Penitentiary, where he dwells today.

After Hartsock's final conviction, Col. Lester Forst, the Commissioner of the Connecticut State Police, issued this letter of commendation to the personnel involved:

"The trial of Michael Hartsock has been completed and I join with presiding Judge Robert Hale in recognizing the superior efforts and professionalism put forth by each of you to bring this case to adjudication. It certainly puts a fitting cap on one of the proudest moments of our Department's history."




Police believe that the murderer was so terrified by the sudden mass return fire that he dropped his rifles and intentionally "played possum."



and 7.62mm NATO ball. Two troopers fired a total of 33 or 34 9mm Silvertips from their Berettas, a magazine of 28 .223 rounds was emptied by the officers, and two rounds of buckshot were employed.

All troopers involved praised the fire-


















shots being fired from a moving vehicle, that weapon did not exactly deliver a rate of hits that would make a sniper proud, either. And remember that Hartsock fired dozens of rounds from a .30 carbine and a .308 rifle without putting a bullet into a man, either. The shotgun blasts by Hes-



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TO IMPROVE YOU MUST PRACTICE, TO PRACTICE YOU MUST RELOAD

Developing the skills necessary for IPSC or action shooting competition means firing lots of practice rounds, and for most of us that means reloading ammunition. The only exceptions are (a) those who live in countries in which handloading is prohibited, and (b) Tommy Campbell.

All the rest of us can plan on spending a good chunk of our leisure time searching in the dirt and weeds for fired cases, cleaning brass and cranking on the handle of a reloading machine. Reloading can be an engrossing hobby in its own right, but volume loading is a different proposition.

Once a satisfactory load has been developed, it becomes simply a matter of churning them out, every round as nearly like all the others as possible. Minor savings in time, that might mean little to the average handloader, start adding up when one is turning out a thousand, or maybe several thousand, rounds a month.

Good reloads start with clean, properly inspected cases, and there's no better way to clean those fired cases than with a case tumbler. Lyman's big model 3200 Turbo Tumbler is popular with volume reloaders because of its large capacity, high speed agitation and durable construction.

The only problem with this and other big-capacity tumblers is separating the cases from the media after cleaning. Normally the cleaning bowl must be removed from the base, the contents sifted through a screen and the cases agitated by hand to remove any material remaining in the brass.

Recently Lyman has introduced its

trademarked "Auto-Flo" system that speeds up the separating process considerably. The bowl is in two parts: the bottom part includes a drain port, while the main cleaning bowl has a slotted floor that allows the polishing media, but not the cases, to pass through.

In operation it's both simple and fast. When the cases are clean, stick the drain pan (included) beneath the port, pull the drain plug, and in a couple of minutes the normal agitating action of the machine will sift the media through the floor slots and into the pan. With the machine still running, stir the cases up with your hands for a few seconds. The vibrating action of the tumbler will help dislodge any remaining media, leaving the sparkling clean cases ready for loading.

Suggested retail on the Lyman 3200 Auto-Flo is \$249.95. The standard model 3200 without the Auto-Flo system will remain in the product line at \$219.95. Both have a rated capacity of 1,000 .38 Special cases.

Recognizing that this may be a bit more machine than all but the commercial loader needs, Lyman has also introduced the model 2200, with a capacity of 750 .38 Special cases. It's available with or without the Auto-Flo system, at suggested retail prices of \$199.95

and \$169.95 respectively, and should have ample capacity for even the most dedicated competitor.

If you happen to already own a standard 3200 or 2200, Lyman hasn't forgotten you. The Auto-Flo system can be added for \$69.95 (model 3200) or \$59.95 (model 2200). These Turbo Tumblers are highly recommended. Quiet, fast, and very well made, they can be counted on to provide years of good service, backed by a reputable company.

See your Lyman dealer, or write: Lyman Products Corporation, Dept. AH, 147 West St., Middlefield CT 06455. A toll-free information line is available as well: 1-800-22-LYMAN (in Connecticut, (203)349-3421).

Dillon Case Feeder

Few reloading products have had as dramatic effect on handgun shooting as the Dillon 450/550 reloading machine. Before the Dillon came along, progressive loading machines were scarce and expensive, intended more for clubs and commercial loaders than for individuals.

Even top-level competitors used single-stage presses, putting in an hour's hard work to get 100 rounds of ammo. The Dillon RL-450 would easily turn out

The great Dillon 550B remains the workhorse in the line, fast and durable, priced within easy reach of the casual shooter.

300 to 400 rounds an hour, at a suggested retail price of \$365. Early in 1984 Dillon really kicked over the applecart. They went to factory direct sales, cutting the price almost in half, from \$365 to \$185, and suddenly anyone who could afford to shoot at all could afford a progressive machine.

It's no secret that there has been criticism within the industry for bypassing the dealer network with factory direct sales, but there's another side to the argument. "Informed sources" (always wanted to use that phrase) indicated that sales of the RL-450 increased by a factor of at least 10 times at the lower price.

Many thousands of shooters were buying who simply would not have bought at a higher price. With a progressive machine these buyers began shooting more—a lot more. They needed powder, primers, and bullets on an ongoing basis and as skill levels improved they became involved in new shooting sports, needing new calibers, guns, and accessories, to the benefit of the entire shooting industry.

At any rate, Dillon Precision has become one of the big outfits in the reloading industry, with an expanded product line ranging from the aptly named Square Deal to the awesome RL-

Continued on page 83

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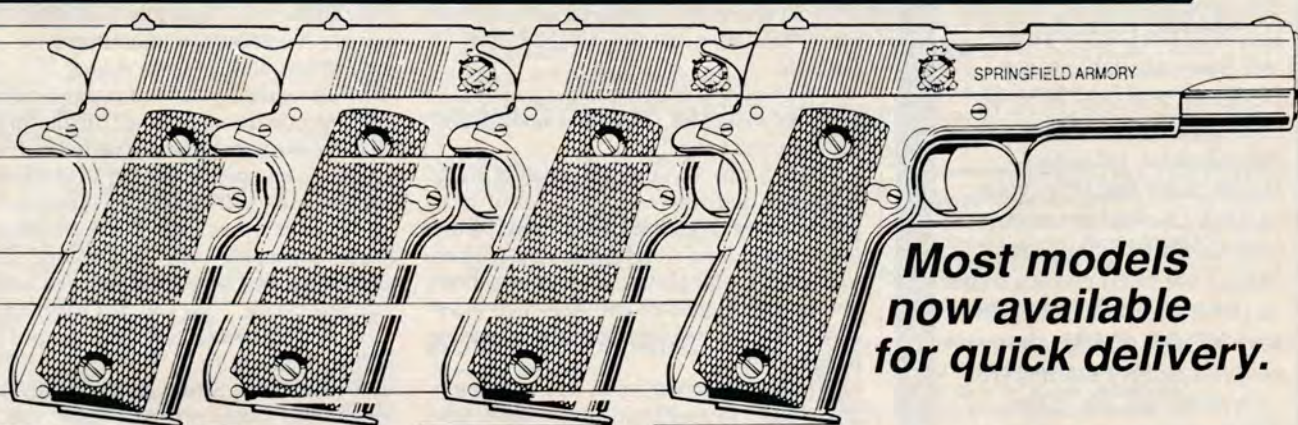
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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

ANOTHER X-RING FOR THE COFFEE POT: THAT'S A GUNSMITH'S TASK

I nearly tripped over Herbie, my shop cat, as I closed the front door and walked toward the counter. His meow probably meant, "After a hard night with the little Angora on the corner, I need my nourishment." He worked over his dry food as I readied the old coffee pot for the early customers.

Jerry came through the door and headed straight for the sound of rapid percolation. "It'll be ready any minute now," I told him.

"When are you going to get a new coffee pot?" he asked. "This old one's ready for the scrap heap."

"Oh, I don't know. I've had it for a long time and we've served a lot of people from the high and the mighty to the low and the lonely." The red light winked to signal a complete cycle, so we both poured our cups full and began to blow across the surface, cooling it to drinking temperature.

The door opened again and a strikingly beautiful brunette girl in her late twenties, wearing a mini skirt and carrying a pistol case, flowed across the floor toward our bleary eyed little group. Three pairs of eyes didn't miss a single subtle movement. She smiled and handed me the cased pistol.

"Am I too early? I need a few things done to my equipment this morning."

Jerry's coffee almost went down his windpipe. Herbie replied with a meow that could have meant, "You've come to the right group of volunteers."

She picked him up and sat next to Jerry. Herbie made himself right at home in her lap.

"Coffee with cream and sugar?" Jerry asked her.

"Straight from the pot," She moistened the tip of her finger and ran it suggestively around the rim of the styrofoam cup. "I like everything natural and unadulterated."

I unwrapped the stainless Government Model and asked her what she needed done to it. Just then Herbie hooked her blouse and pulled it taut over some very nice 34 B equipment.

"Meow," he said to her, which I translated as "Poor kid, with the price of skirts and blouses what it is, you probably couldn't afford underwear."

"You have sharp toenails," she scolded him. Jerry came to her rescue saying, "Control yourself, old buddy," as he put him on the floor.

"The problem I'm having is this," she said, taking the pistol and empty magazine from my hand. "I can't seem to hit the aperture head-on without skidding off a grip bottom."

"We've all had that problem at one time or another. Let me show you an easy way to find the magazine well." Jerry volunteered, slipping a Pachmayr snap cap (Brownells) into the magazine. He had her hold the pistol and magazine and guided her motions from behind.

"Just extend your index finger along the front of the magazine, tilt the magazine forward and when your index finger touches your pinkie on the pistol frame, tilt the mag and shove it into place."

"It works, but I'd still like to have a flared magazine well," she replied. Then she turned her head, and with an impish grin she asked, "Did you just have strenuous physical exercise? You're puffing like a steam engine."

I installed a Smith & Alexander magazine, that works without frame modification, and a pair of special combat style grips (King's Gun Works).

In checking the pistol for function I detected a loose plunger tube, so I staked it with Brownells plunger tube staking tool, supporting the frame in a Scott/McDougall 1911 auto bench block (Brownells). I've found that the bench block prevents marring a stainless frame, something that the older bucking block will often do.

A set of Wilson-Rogers stainless magazines rounded out her requirements. She wrote a check for the damages and asked, "I'm new here, where's the nearest range?"

Jerry was quick to volunteer, "I'm headed out that way now, if you want to follow me, and I know a nice little restaurant on the way."

"Sounds great," She smiled at him.

"Meow," Herbie interjected. I took this to mean "Another X ring group for the old coffee pot!"

As the pair exited through the doorway, I said, "I wonder how he'll break it to her that he means the electronic shooting range in his living room."

"Somehow, I think everything else that happens around here today will be an anti-climax."

"Meow," Herbie replied, which had to mean: "Congratulations, you deduct the obvious." His nose disappeared into his cup of milk as I walked back into the shop area.



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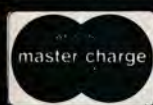
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SIXGUN or AUTO PISTOL



for self-defense?

A combat veteran of three wars and a slew of gunfights in his career as a lawman speaks frankly about what is the best combat pistol.

By Col. Charles Askins

I sat at a banquet the other evening with Jim Boyle. This young Tejano is the chief of police of a suburb of Houston, Texas. He is, I'd reckon, about 45 and has been a law officer ever since he got out of high school.

"My town is considerin' arming us with 9mm automatics, when they do that I'm turnin' in mah badge," grumbled the lawman.

I considered that statement and replied, "Look, Old Boy, more men have been killed with the Nine Millimeter than all the other calibers in the book."

"Whadda mean?" he glared at me, "There ain't been scarcely nobody in my town shot with that peewee." And after a moment's thought he added, "Now they wanna make our military go to war with this two-bit number."

"Look, Jim," I was being patient with this copper, "the jerry Schmeisser 9mm killed no less than a half-million good American GIs during World War II. More casualties resulted from that 9mm than from all the other small arms in the brouhaha." That shut him up, although reluctantly.

The choice of a 9mm for our new military caliber met with my full approval, but the selection of a foreign pistol decidedly did not. We make the best auto pistols in the world right here and to go afield and select a European model was dead wrong.

A somewhat amusing sidelight to the selection of a pistol for the military is the

fact that after three wars it has been my observation that there ain't nobody killed with the belt weapon noway. Only officers now pack the pistol and those company, battalion and brigade leaders that I watched in action invariably had a rifle in hand.

True, the old .45 M-1911 swung from the belt, but it was in a button-down holster.

Toward the tag end of WW-II and in Korea and Vietnam, general officers packed a belt weapon. A Colt .32 ACP, strictly a badge of office like the stars on the shirt collar. If this beginning may sound like I am a dyed-in-the-wool auto pistol user, perish the thought.

The Combat Sixgun

Of the 53 handguns kicking around this camp, fully half of them are cylinder models. I cut my teeth on the revolver and have probably shot more outlaws with the gun than all the selfloaders I own.

It has always been my experience that I can get off the first shot with the sixgun faster than the automatic. The latter has got to be cocked if it is carried with the hammer down and if it is packed with the hammer eared back and the safety in the lock position, this invariably takes me a mite longer.

The old double action has a stock that stands up high and it is outstretched—easy and quick to grasp, fast to clear leather. The DA pull is never too stiff

especially when time is of the essence and that first shot can be decidedly critical.

I ran up on a big escaped con from the Alabama penitentiary one time and this jazbo was beating my partner to death with my partner's own Colt .45 New Service. I shot this big con three times in the chest with an old .44-40 New Service I had and all the shots were triggered off double action. The distance was just about 30 feet.

An interesting sidelight on this little escapade was that when I fired old Bill's New Service after the scrap it would shoot 10 inches high at 20 yards. The barrel, and it is a heavy tube, was bent upward.

My partner's skull was fractured from the blows. Old Bill eventually recovered but he was always somewhat goofy and was retired from the Border Patrol.

A Sixgun's Faults

I've never had a friend, no matter how highly regarded, but that I could not find fault with the rascal. The same is true of the sixshooter. They ain't perfect by a damn sight!

Maybe the worst single drawback to the cylinder weapon is the fact that it only holds six rounds. Depending on the gravity of the situation this is a most serious limitation! Once that wheel model runs dry it takes just one hell of a long time to recharge.

Now take such selfloaders as this

Beretta which some Ordnance board decided was just the handgun for the future: it has a magazine which contains 15 rounds. And the Browning Hi-Power holds 13 rounds, even the Colt Combat Commander in 9mm offers nine rounds. These are all really valid and truly grave advantages and simply cannot be ignored.

And if this were not enough, all it requires to reload is to slap a fresh clip in the piece. For really fast action when the other feller has already triggered off two shots at you and somehow, miraculously, missed, you go into action with the six-gun and you'll probably miss too!

The reason is that the revolver points badly. The trouble is the barrel is too high above the supporting hand. The barrel is four-inches above the centerline of the grip and this is utterly wrong.

The properly designed handgun must have the barrel in prolongation of the trigger finger or as near this prolongation as the designer can achieve. Some auto pistols now come close to this ideal design. They are infinitely ahead of the ancient wheel model.

Automatics

This is precisely the reason that in a gunfight the auto pistol is always the better. The barrel is an inch or so above the hand, but not too much.

Best of the automatics as a precise pointing weapon is, unfortunately, the non-lethal types. The Smith Model 41 and the Ruger MK.II Target point extremely well; the reason is the barrel is barely above the supporting hand. Both are 22 calibers, hardly the fighting kind.

The more recoil, as when firing the big calibers, the poorer the marksman will shoot. The handgun kicks upward vigorously and to get back on target takes time and care. It took American pistolmen most of this century to discover that the only intelligent way to manhandle the revolver or the auto pistol was with both hands.

I won the pistol championship of this country one time firing with one hand. I'd never fire that way again.

The combat match shooters have shown us the way. They grasp that gun in both fists. You want to do the same.

The run-of-mill S&W, Colt or Ruger revolver is fairly accurate. It will keep all its shots in the 10-ring of the Standard American target at 25 yards. You cannot complain about that kind of performance. The 10-ring measures 3-1/3 inches.

Few indeed of the centerfire auto pistols will do as well. The selfloader is inherently inaccurate. This is because the manufacturers do not fit barrel to slide

nor barrel to the link nor yet fit up the barrel to the face of the breechblock so that all tolerances are removed.

One of the worst offenders in this regard is the old Model 1911 .45 Auto. Just as it comes from the factory as a standard issue item it will just about keep all its shots on the bottom of a #3 wash-tub at 50 yards. If, however, that same standard issue Model 1911 is turned over to one of our geewhiz gunsmiths he can turn out in jig time a pistol that will shoot circles around the best of the revolvers.

A .45 Auto tuned by a Bill Wilson of Arkansas, Pachmayr of LA, or The Man Hoag at Canoga Park, Calif., is the only way to go. Such a pistol will shoot into a three-inch circle at 50 yards all day long.

Guns and Blackjacks

Handguns are sorta fragile animals. They should be pampered and cared for like a pet coon. I watched a teammate of mine one night—his name was Bush—whack a smuggler just over the ear with a Colt .45 New Service sixgun. The cylinder latch busted and the cylinder fell out of the gun and the cartridges spilled out in the sand.

In those days the old New Service was chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge and these were contained in two 3-shot clips. Bush fetched the contrabandista such a wallop that both the 3-shot clips fell out of the revolver. Needless to say the smuggler was knocked colder than a whore's heart.

This sport of thumping the opposition with the belt artillery was pretty common in the US Border Patrol of 50 years

ago. In the El Paso subdistrict alone during one 10-year period we had a gun fight on the average of every 17 days for the entire decade.

This made a man a little quick on the draw. And if one of the boys bent on importing the illegal stuff got a little fractious he was apt to get belted. Dave Scoles was the exception to the rule 'mongst the officers. He persisted in packing an old Model 1911 .45 Auto.

One night he swung this pistol sorta freehanded and clipped a contrabando on the left ear. I did not see the incident but the swing must have been a good one. The slide was driven off the gun. The front end of the receiver was bent and the slide completely separated from it. The pistol was a wreck. So was the smuggler.

The moral of this double barreled story is don't use the pistol like a black-jack!

.38 Special vs. .357 Magnum

The consensus of opinion these days is that the only worthwhile revolver cartridge begins with the .357 Magnum. The old .38 Special is now passé. "It just ain't got the oomph," a shooter told me the other day.

Well that may be, certainly the .357 is a better loading. One time—it was in the spring of 1945—I found myself in a smallish German hamlet some miles east of the Rhine and on the mainline to Berlin. I was the Battlefield Recovery Officer for all of First US Army and I frequently traveled with the combat elements of our tank battalions.

At any rate, at the moment in discussion, I had diverted my activities a mite from the recovery of damaged matériel to the more entertaining business of looting German houses. I was in search of a Merkel shotgun and entering a rather pretentious haus I commenced to ransack the place for the best of the German scatter-guns.

I was on the ground floor and moving quietly when I heard footsteps in the basement. I moved to the backdoor and just as I cleared the exit a Wehrmacher in full battle-dress burst out of the basement.

He charged off toward the back fence which was of solid stone and five feet in height. I was packing, that day, a .38 Special Colt New Service with a four-inch barrel. It was the Border Patrol standard issue sidearm at the time. I had borrowed mine and sorta forgot to turn it in.

The revolver was charged with .38 Special Winchester loadings with a 158 grain lead bullet traveling at 750 fps and churning up 200 ft/lbs of muzzle English.

This German soldier had a
Continued on page 99



STOPPING POWER DEBATE IGNORES 'WIMP FACTOR' IN GUNFIGHTING

A high-echelon cop from the west coast wrote me recently to comment that one thing that never seems to be discussed in the ongoing stopping power debate is "wimp factor." Some criminals, he finds, are wimps who will collapse upon infliction of the most minor wound, while others are raging beasts who can take multiple injuries that should be almost immediately lethal, yet still stay on their feet long enough to murder the responding officers.

His point is well taken. He cites a gunfight between scumbags that he responded to. Both men had shot each other in virtually the same point of the abdomen, one with a .22 pistol and the other with a Colt .45 automatic loaded with hardball.

Upon arrival of police, the one hit with the .22 was prostrate and moaning in helpless agony, while the recipient of the .45 slug was fully ambulatory and seemed no more afflicted than by stomach cramps.

Intrigued, the senior cop followed up

their careers with a street policeman's version of a "psychological autopsy." The one who'd fallen to the puny .22 slug was something of a weasel, who spent his life preying on the weak and avoiding the strong; the one who'd taken the .45 slug so ambivalently in the "K-5 zone" was a hard ex-con who had learned long ago to ignore pain and refuse defeat.

The shooting of Michael Platt in Miami during April of 1986 is a classic example. Platt took a Winchester Silver-tip 9mm Parabellum bullet in the chest moments after being run off the road by FBI agents, and seemed not the least slowed down as he ran a lethal assault course and shot down several G-men, two fatally.

Though the bullet had cut a vital artery and produced an "unsurvivable" wound, Platt was so violently active that the surviving officers saw no indication at the gunfight scene that he'd been hit at all before he began spreading death with his Mini-14 rifle.

Only careful evidence technicians, using blood trails and other evidence to reconstruct the incident, were able to prove that Platt had in fact been dying from a K-5 hit when he shot down the patrol of agents.

This led to all manner of asinine speculation that a .45 slug, or a 10mm slug, or a deeper-penetrating 147 grain 9mm bullet (pick one) would have ended the fight and saved all those agents from being shot. This is arrant horse manure.

New York City alone has at least five cases of suspects who took 12-gauge rifled slugs and stayed up and running for roughly as long if not longer than Michael Platt. Reportedly, one FBI official has suggested that based on this shooting, agents should now keep firing into the suspect until he goes down.

Well, no crap, Dick Tracy. This is a rule of gunfighting that has existed since the dawn of gunpowder: keep shooting the other man until he goes down. One agent, who would die moments later at the hands of his opponent, hit Platt once out of over 20 shots that he fired at him. He was *trying* to shoot the rifleman until he went down. His tactical training failed him, and no magic bullet or magic gun can change that fact.

Platt had a clean toxicology screen: no drugs, no alcohol, just an incredible adrenaline high triggered by fight or flight reflex as he entered the death battle with his partner, who would die by his side.

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who get shot. The fearful rookie taken by surprise feels a trivial wound from a snubby .22 pistol as "like being hit with a ball-peen hammer and thrown off your feet."

A disarmed cop who knows he's about to be torn away from his life is shot five times with his own .357 Magnum, yet still charges forward and rips the empty Model 19 away from his antagonist and beats him half to death before other cops pull him away.

Both men fully recover. Both men went through their situations in the late 1970s, and recounted their experiences to me in detail.

Analyzing the two situations, one comes back to a basic truth I learned long ago: when a bullet meets a man, the man often does more to determine the outcome than the bullet.

The young cop hit with the .22 slug had been responding to a burglary alarm that he didn't really believe was anything but a short circuit. Checking the doors of the establishment, he was relieved to find that all was in order. He was walking away, what little adrenaline the situation had produced running right out of him, and in a total "condition white" state of false relaxation when the 40 grain bullet "smashed into him and knocked him flat on his face."

The fall caused more injury than the gunshot wound, and the only thing that saved his life was that his attacker figured him for dead instead of running up and shooting him a few times in the head. He could have done that: the unsuspecting puppy policeman was totally stunned, and in a state of psychogenically induced helplessness.

In the Magnum incident, the officer had been taken hostage several minutes

"Condition Black, Lethal Assault In Progress"

before. Tension had built, and at the moment of the deadly assault the cop was on the opposite end of the danger spectrum: "Condition Black Lethal Assault in Progress."

He had pictured his family, including his crippled young daughter, having to live without him. As he lunged at his antagonist and felt the hot searing lances of Magnum bullets going through his flesh and fireball muzzle flashes exploding at nearly contact distance, his only thought was to overwhelm and neutralize the threat, to live, to come home.

The would-be copkiller was so disori-

Continued on page 82

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HOUSECLEANING AT IHMSA BRINGS NEW LEADERS AND NEW VITALITY

The biggest news to hit silhouetting since its inception more than 10 years ago is the sweeping change that has taken place in IHMSA leadership.

For the past several years, IHMSA can only be described as stagnant. After a brilliant beginning with a new sport that literally changed the handgunning world forever, IHMSA refused to change with the times and created constant friction with the firearms industry. The very same industry that provides all the equipment necessary for silhouetting to survive!

Change just for the sake of change is not desirable. But when membership is not growing but diminishing, perhaps change is necessary.

Sweeping changes hit IHMSA at The International Matches this year. Two names familiar to silhouetters, Frank Scotto of Connecticut and Scott Lindley

of Idaho have been elected as president and vice-president by an outstanding show of support by the voting delegates.

Scotto, former vice-president, received 67% of the vote and Lindley, 70%. Both men have to feel that this is definitely a mandate for change.

The first change has already taken place. IHMSA Headquarters has been moved from Idaho Falls, Idaho to Burlington, Iowa where the office will be overseen by the new Secretary/Treasurer, Al Nielsen. IHMSA will be a real long range effort with Scotto residing in Connecticut, Lindley in Idaho, and Nielsen in Iowa.

It was obvious to anyone that had anything to do with silhouetting under the IHMSA banner that discontent with the organization was growing and especially so within the past year. Obviously the voting delegates felt the same way with their unprecedented house cleaning.

Two weeks after the voting in early August, headquarters were moved to Iowa and the first issue of the new official IHMSA silhouette paper, now known as *IHMSA News* until a better name is picked, was mailed out to members in mid-September.

What does the future hold for IHMSA? I called Frank Scotto and asked him to share his views of the future as well as his ideas for any changes that will be taking place. Frank gracefully sent me a long letter immediately and expressed hope that the *American Handgunner* would be supportive. I assured him of that support.

He also offered that everyone did not have to necessarily agree with him on everything but each other's opinion could still be respected. I like that and it is a major change of policy.

What then are Scotto's immediate concerns?

1) The first has been taken care of, namely the moving of headquarters and the publishing of a new paper. *The Silhouette* did not belong to IHMSA. The new publication belongs to the membership and Scotto promises that this will be a true membership paper and members will be allowed to express themselves without editing of reports on the part of headquarters.

In all fairness to Elgin Gates, who served as editor of *The Silhouette* until his untimely death, I must admit that I never had one single word edited in all the articles and test reports that I wrote for him.

2) Along with the new paper comes a new policy in accepting advertising. *The Silhouette* did not accept open advertising except to sell its own products. Scotto promises to have open industry advertising to promote more products and, equally important, to provide needed revenue for IHMSA.

This blocking of advertising has been a major friction point with many manufacturers of shooting equipment.

3) For a number of years, IHMSA has been a dirty word in many parts of the industry. Scotto shared that he has been spending much of his time doing some much needed fence mending within the industry. I certainly applaud him for these positive efforts.

As he says, "The industry is as important to us as the membership, for without the support of the industry, gun development, financial assistance in the form of donations, publicity in their publications, etc., all will eventually fall by the wayside."

How right he is! Industry, Press, and Shooters must form a strong three-legged base of support for handgunning. None can exist separately. We all need each other especially to provide a solid front against the anti-gun element. The enemy is too strong for us to waste energies fighting each other.



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Scotto says that the response from industry has been very positive, as we would all expect. Members should all realize this and not be part of any element that tries to tear down the very ones that provide not only our handguns for silhouetting but for self-defense, hunting, sport shooting of all types and just plain old plinkin'.

4) "IHMSA must be run like a business." To Scotto that means a number of things. Personalities do not become part of vendettas because of their own personal likes or dislikes. Customers, in this case IHMSA members, must be serviced properly.

Businesses that do not please customers do not last. That has happened to IHMSA recently. Scotto says, "I am not so innocent as to think that we can please all of the people all of the time, but I do believe if we please the majority most of the time, we'll have a strong, prosperous and long lived organization."

Scotto, like myself, is against the Production Price Ceiling Rule.

5) Two items that Scotto says must not change are the Production Gun Rule and the prohibition against "shoot for loot." I am sure the vast majority of the membership will support Scotto on both of these measures. IHMSA has managed to keep at least part of silhouetting from becoming an equipment race with its shoot-from-the-box Production Rule even though some unscrupulous individuals have managed to skirt around this by swapping parts and sights to get an unofficial "custom" gun to compete with.

Increasing the available prizes is a ticklish issue. It might bring out more shooters, but it might also cause others to quit. Scotto is very strong in maintaining the long-standing IHMSA rule against large prizes in either money or material and I do not see membership going for any great change in this area.

6) Scotto, like myself, is against the Production Price Ceiling rule as it is now written. "I really think something has to be done with our Production Price Limit Rule. The foreign community, to the best of my knowledge, has no set minimum wage as we know it. Guns like the Manurhin are perfectly legal in Europe but don't make the limit here. At the same time, our foreign counterparts can shoot here at the matches with them. There has to be a way to allow all of our shooters, here and abroad, to compete legally on an equal basis."

7) Along these same lines Scotto says that we must do something to maintain a

Continued on page 81



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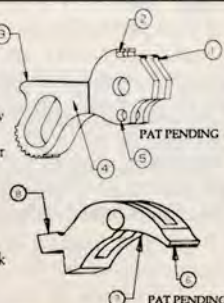
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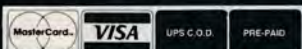
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ACCURACY IS MISUNDERSTOOD BUT GOOD HANDLOADS ARE THE SECRET

Handgun accuracy seems to be a highly misunderstood subject. I'm continually bombarded with questions regarding how well a particular gun or caliber will shoot. And continually amazed at the preconceived notion that all you have to do is pick up a gun, load it and sit down and shoot sub-minute of angle groups with the single shots or two-inch groups with revolvers at 100 yards.

Friends, it really isn't that easy. If you think it is, you've been reading too many gun magazines.

Let's look at the entire shooting system.

The gun is capable of a certain degree of accuracy at any given moment which may not be the same as the next moment. For example, an XP-100 that cracks its stock or a revolver that rocks inside its grips from one shot to the next.

The sights may or may not be of good

quality. Burris makes the only handgun scopes that are capable of being readily adjustable to eliminate parallax at a given distance. No scope is parallax free at all distances.

The ammunition may or may not be particularly suitable to a particular gun. Just because a particular ammunition is quite accurate in one gun doesn't mean it is going to be equally accurate in another of the same caliber. Nor is accurate ammunition all that easy to make.

The shooting rest and style may actually induce a loss of accuracy. Try shooting a group off the bedcover of my truck and you may not even be on the paper. Most everything shoots at least a foot high at a hundred if the sandbags are placed on the bedcover and groups usually are terrible.

The way the gun is placed on the bag, and held, also makes a difference in the size of the groups. Not to mention a target

that is compatible with the particular sight being used.

Obviously the shooter has nothing to do with the accuracy of the system because all of us would put every shot through the same hole every time if the hardware was any good, right?

Accuracy Particulars

Let's take a look at a few of the particulars in each part of the system. Except the shooter—he is perfect and there is no sense even suggesting he isn't.

Okay, with everything working right, if you have an over-the-counter revolver that will consistently shoot a five-inch group at 100 yards you better stick with it. Some revolvers can be worked over to group in the three-inch range at 100 yards but that takes a lot of work.

Others simply cannot be made to shoot very accurately due to inherent problems with the gun itself which are impractical to correct.

I frequently see accuracy tests which are meaningless. If you load a variety of ammunition in multiple series of five to test, that test is essentially invalid. A large number of rounds and guns must be conditioned to each other prior to serious accuracy testing.

The gun should be cleaned properly and at least 25 rounds of the test ammunition fired on target to see what is happening.

Frequently it will be found that accuracy will increase to a certain point and remain at that point until fouling causes deterioration in accuracy.

The worst case I know of was in testing some of the experimental Hornady swaged lead 38s prior to the time they were introduced years ago. I had a Python that had been reworked extensively and at a 25 yards from a clean gun this particular ammunition would group about 3.5" for six—iron sights of course.

Continued shooting showed marked improvement in the accuracy. After 30 shots went through the tube it was a half-inch-25-yard-gun with the same iron sights and shooter. The same conditioning frequently increases the accuracy of jacketed bullet ammunition.

I've found simply shooting a lot of five or six shot groups with different ammunition shot over the top of the previous load without conditioning the barrel to the new ammo usually results in a pretty average group sizes for the gun with a few excellent groups which statistically are invalid. If you test this way, you may be passing up some loads that may be truly excellent.

One group proves only what one group did. I feel a 30 to 50 shot group is far more indicative of what the system is actually doing.

Do you ever trim your revolver cases to uniform length so crimps will be uni-

Continued on page 79

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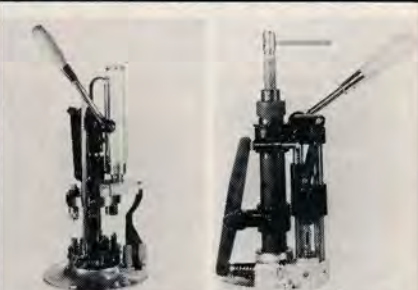


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MAGNUM PRIMERS DON'T ALWAYS IMPROVE STANDARD HANDLOADS

Silhouette shooters and handgun hunters have found that heavier bullets are proving to be good choices for the .44 Magnum. There are quite a few in the 300 gr. range but most have been either cast or expensive custom jacketed types. Now Sierra has a 300 gr. JSP.

Sierra's offering is the first jacketed bullet in this weight in a non-custom make. I've shot quite a few of them and have been really impressed with the accuracy potential.

Sierra has just sent me some loading data for their new 300 gr. JSP bullet. The jacket is pretty thick to hold together on silhouettes so expansion is not one of the goals. As with any magnum cartridge maximum overall length is important and Sierra recommends 1.735" for the .44 Magnum.

I've only had a chance to try one powder with this bullet and I think a word of caution is in order. I've shot some of the heavier loads with Hercules 2400 and, although Sierra reports that they have had no problems with the maximum load of 2400, I did.

I experienced difficult extraction from two different Rugers. This may well be nothing more than the differences between guns, but I would strongly suggest that you begin around 18.0 gr. and work up very carefully from there.

Magnum Primers

The word magnum often seems to be used synonymously with "better." If a little is good, more is better is a popular reloading philosophy.

Some folks think substituting magnum

primers for the standard variety will improve the performance of their loads. Actually the truth is that they may do more harm than good and the practice can, under some circumstances, be dangerous. Using a magnum primer with some of the faster burning powders can cause too rapid ignition and raise pressures to levels that can sometimes be dangerous.

When I was beginning to think about this topic I wondered if some comparison of burning rates would be in order, but there are plenty of slower burning powders that aren't helped by magnum primers either. Conventional wisdom is that ball powders are harder to ignite and require magnum primers. This isn't true either, at least not as a generalization.

I was also tempted to try to generalize between extruded and ball powders, at least as far as their use in magnum cartridges was concerned, but that didn't work either. About the only extruded powder that seems to benefit is good old 2400 and, among the ball types, only 296, H110, 680 and Accurate #9 are good candidates.

Blue Dot, an extruded powder that is very popular in magnum loads, rarely needs them. The best advice is to adhere to the published data. If the load was developed using magnum primers it's safe to use them but it's not a bright idea to substitute magnum primers for the standard variety otherwise.

I've done some preliminary testing of loads where I substituted standard primers for the magnums and have found some instances where velocities were actually higher with the standard primer

and many cases where velocity spreads were lower. This suggests that there may be cases where better accuracy will be the result.

It's too soon to make any sweeping judgements on the subject and I certainly don't think you should never use magnum primers, but bigger isn't always best.

Redding Profile Crimp Die

One often overlooked consideration in magnum loads is the amount of crimp and the resulting bullet pull. In fact, most magnum loads are more dependent upon bullet pull than the primer for consistent velocity.

Continued on page 78

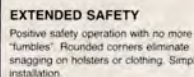
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BY JOHN TAFFIN

TAFFIN TESTS

Winchester '73, "The Gun That Won The West," had as its most serious chambering the .44 Winchester Center Fire. Introduced in the same year as the .45 Colt, the .44-40 looks much

sixguns were barrel marked "COLT FRONTIER SIXSHOOTER".

In popularity, the .44-40 was second only to the .45 Colt in chamberings of the Colt Single Action followed by the .38-40 (.38WCF) and .32-20 (.32WCF), both

of which were also chambered in the Model '73 Winchester.

All three WCF cartridges were

chambered in the beautiful little Model '92 Winchester carbine, but were totally eclipsed with the coming of smokeless powder and the .30-30 in 1894.

Colt made something over 150,000 .44-40 Frontier Sixshooters, and in 1888 introduced their Flat Top Target Model.

These were simply Single Action Armies with the top of the frame flattened and the installation of a rear sight movable for windage, as furnished on the original Ruger Single-Sixes in 1953. Elevation was accomplished by a movable blade in the front sight held in place by a screw. Very crude by today's standards, but a start towards modern target sights.

Less than 1000 Flat Top Target Models were made, only 21 being in .44WCF.

Colt also chambered the big New Service double action revolver in .44-40, and Smith made a few Frontier Models in both single action and double action in .44-40. A few Triple-Locks even saw chambering in .44WCF.

By 1941, the Colt Single Action was removed from production and the .44-40 was dead and buried. Things looked like it would stay that way.

When Colt resumed production of the Colt Single Action in 1955, which was followed in 1962 by the modernized version of the Flat Top Target, the New Frontier, the calibers were .45 Colt, .357 Magnum, .38 Special, and .44 Special. None were produced in .44-40.

The Colt died again in 1974, only to be resurrected in 1978. This time, before it was removed from production for the third time, it was once again chambered in .44-40 in both Single Action and New Frontier versions with a few Sheriff's Models being made with both .44-40 and .44 Special cylinders.

The Seville was also produced in small quantities in .44-40 with a few dual

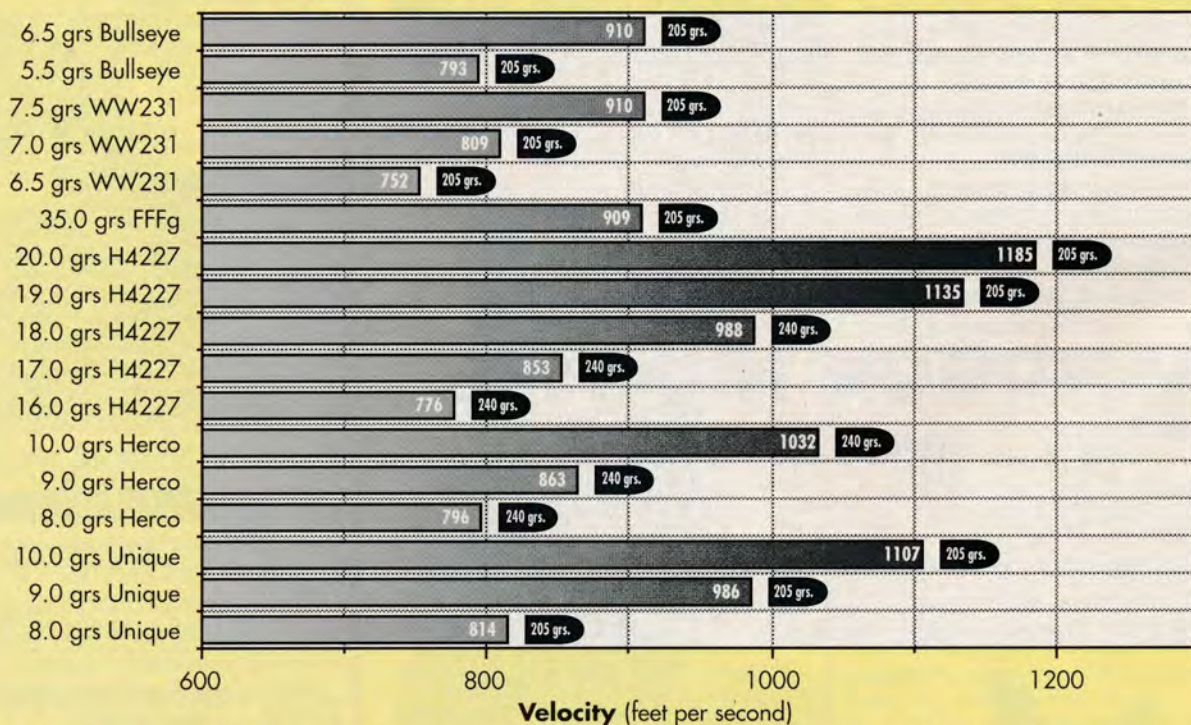
the .44-40

like a .45 that has been necked down to .44 giving a slightly bottlenecked cartridge for ease of feeding in the lever action Winchester.

Something was just not quite right for the two-gun man who had to buy two different cartridges for his sixgun and carbine, and since the .44-40 and .45 Colt were both loaded with 40 grains of black-powder over 200 and 255 grain bullets respectively, and since the .44-40 brass was only .020" longer than .45 Colt, it made sense to chamber the Model P six-gun in .44-40 and this was done in 1878.

Although the .45 was never officially labeled the Peacemaker, the .44-40 Colt

High Performance .44-40 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.

cylinder .44 Magnum/.44-40 revolvers.

All sixguns chambered for the .44-40 now are being brought in from Italy by such companies as EMF and Cimarron. I have had experience with four .44-40 Italian made sixguns, a three-inch Sheriff's Model, a five and one-half inch Dakota, a seven and one-half inch Bisley replica, and a seven and one-half inch Remington copy. All four shot extremely well with the Bisley capable of one hole groups at 25 yards and the Remington capable of one-inch groups.

A number of years ago I read a test report on the Remington copy in .44-40 in which the author got three to four inch groups at 25 yards with factory ammo in the 1875 Remington copy. I expected the same when I received my nickel-plated .44-40, but I slugged the bore first and found it to be .431".

Since factory jacketed bullets run .426" in the .44-40, it is easy to see why the accuracy was so poor. By using cast bullets of .431-.432", the Remington rewarded me with one-inch groups.

Many years ago, I purchased a "patina" Bisley for \$160. It proved to be in good condition, but the bore slugged .432" and the cylinders would not accept bullets larger than .428".

The old barrel came off, was replaced by a seven and one-half inch .44 Special barrel of .426" groove diameter and that old Bisley has given groups of one-half inch using 9.0 grains of Unique and the Lyman #42798 .44-40 flat-point bullet.

These two experiences spotlight one of the problems in loading for the .44-40. There seems to be no real standard for barrel groove diameter, with specimens running from .426" all the way up to .432". Sixguns in .44-40 chambering must be measured for groove diameter and treated accordingly.

That is certainly not the only problem in loading for the .44-40. Since it is a bottle-necked cartridge, carbide dies, so prevalent and taken for granted with straight-walled pistol cartridges, are out. The extra steps of lubing and then wiping the cases free of lubricant must be added to reloading the .44-40.

The worst problem with the .44-40 is necks that are paper thin. I lose a few cases everytime I reload, always for the same reason: I ruin the case necks either by starting a bullet crooked or getting a case off center and hitting the mouth on the bottom of a die. With other pistol cartridges, one can usually stop quickly enough to keep from ruining the case. With the .44-40, the slightest mistake and the case is gone.

And I emphasize *mistake*; by working slowly and carefully, cases will not be ruined.

This week's run of 164 cases is now down to 162, one case lost as the mouth hit the bottom of the decapping die, the other crumpled by a bullet as the neck

was not expanded quite enough. I started with 200 cases in 1981. If .44-40 brass was no longer available, I would certainly be more careful.

Like the .45 Colt, the .44-40 has also been saddled with the "weak brass syndrome," and like the .45 Colt, the problem is not brass but the sixguns that these cartridges have been chambered for dating back more than 100 years.

A long time standard load for the .44-40 with the Lyman #42798 bullet has been 18.5 grains of #2400. This load has been published in numerous books and magazines. This load proved to be too hot in my New Frontier and I have settled on 17.5 grains of #2400 as a maximum load with the Hercules powder.

Older reloading manuals have separate sections for reloading the .44-40 for the Model 92 Winchester and they list loads that use nine grains *more* #2400 than my maximum sixgun load and eight grains *more* than my maximum H4227 load.

So much for the weak .44-40 brass.

But such rifle type loads would be like hand grenades in sixguns. When using reloading manuals, especially some of the older ones, please make sure the .44-40 section is for sixguns.

The original loading of 40 grains of blackpowder cannot be duplicated in modern solid head .44-40 brass. The most I can get into a case and seat the #42798 bullet properly is 35.0 grains of FFFg which gives slightly over 900 fps. The same volume of Pyrodex P raises the muzzle velocity to 1000 fps and both loads will group in 2" at 25 yards.

My favorite powders for the .44-40 are Unique and H4227. Unique and Lyman's #42798 bullet just seem made for each other and in tests with three different .44-40 sixguns, all with seven and one-half inch barrels, the accompanying velocities were obtained. The Remington is a replica from Uberti, the Bisley is a 1912 manufactured Colt with a new .44 Special barrel, the New Frontier is a .44 Special with an extra .44-40 cylinder. Five-shots at 25 yards ran 1 1/4", 1", 1", 7/8" (!), 5/8" (!) and a really bad one of 1 7/8".

This is outstanding accuracy by anyone's standards for any caliber and certainly for any revolver, be it of modern manufacture, replica, or seventy-five plus years old. No one can fault the .44-40 when it comes to accuracy.

Switching to H4227, which seems to deliver accuracy nearly equal to Unique, I prefer 20.0 grains for slightly over 1100 fps. Hodgdon's H4227 has been the answer for a number of large capacity cases such as the .44-40 and .45 Colt, and 19.0 to 20.0 grains of H4227, like 9.0 to 10.0 grains of Unique, performs exceptionally well in the these two old big bore veterans. In some sixguns of these two calibers, H4227 has been the only powder that would give good accuracy.

Winchester's WW231 is another

favorite with the .44-40 and 8.0 grains of this fast burning powder gives slightly over 1000 fps with the #42798 Lyman bullet and shoots into less than one-inch with the standard five shots at 25 yards.

Two "heavyweight" bullets that I use in the .44-40 are Hornady's swaged 240 grain hollowpoint semi-wadcutter and Bull-X's 240 grain bevel base SWC.

Surprisingly, the soft Hornady hollowpoint does not lead my New Frontier barrel even when driven over 1000 fps. For serious defensive work, either of these bullets at 900-1000 fps would be my choice, although the chance of ever employing the .44-40 for this would be extremely remote.

Anything that can be accomplished by the .44-40 can be topped by the .44 Special. However, it is one of those cartridges that hold a certain fascination and if power were the only criteria in a sixgun, only magnums would be sold. Such is not the case, however.

Although not thought of as a target load, my tests over the past 10 years have shown the .44-40 to be capable of target accuracy even in unrefined single action sixguns. And although more deer, and larger game, than anyone could count have fallen to it, it is certainly not a good choice for hunting.

However, it is an excellent small game and varmint load and I have taken many a big Idaho jack with mine. It is one of those relaxing cartridges that I find myself appreciating more and more for plinking, woods loafing and just plain enjoyment. When the wrist has taken all the punishment it can stand from full house .44 Magnum and .454 loads, out comes the enjoyable big bore, the .44-40.

A few years back, I decided to make a thoroughly modern .44-40 by converting an Abilene to a .44 Magnum/.44-40 dual cylindered sixgun. Obtaining an extra .44 Magnum cylinder, I had it rechambered to .44-40 and J.D. Jones also sent along a .44 Magnum T/C barrel that had been rechambered to .44-40. I safely attained 1350 fps in the seven and one-half inch Abilene, and 1750 fps in the ten-inch T/C, both using a hard cast 200 grain bullet. No problems were encountered with the brass, but a problem did surface.

If I had done my homework first, I would have consulted a chart of case dimensions and found that the .44 Magnum measures .455" outside neck diameter, and the .44-40, with its paper thin neck for .426" bullets, goes only .443".

That means that any .44 Magnum that is rechambered to .44-40 is already at least .012" oversize at the neck portion of the cylinder. The constant expansion when fired, and then resizing back down, results in a high rate of brass loss from neck failure. For conversion to .44-40, it is best to start with a

.357 or .41 Magnum.



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WEAVER AND ISOSCELES STANCES BOTH OFFER CERTAIN ADVANTAGES



Leatham says the Weaver stance is better for fast shooting at close range (R) but the Isosceles is better for more precise, moderately fast shooting (above). The ratio of speed and accuracy determines which technique to use, advises the six-time IPSC national champion.



I recently received a call from a shooter who competes in the higher levels of organized practical pistol competition asking my opinion of the Weaver stance. He explained that being from Colorado, the old stomping grounds of Ross Seyfried, most of the shooters in that area are pretty much clones of the 1981 World Champion.

He stated that he himself had adapted a variation of Seyfried's Weaver stance and had also experimented with what is popularly called the Isosceles stance. His question— which did I think was better?

I had to think about this for a minute because the answer is not as simple as you might think. I tend to have loaded answers for most the common questions, and this was no different.

The technique to use is based solely on the requirements of speed versus accuracy. In practical or "action" shooting, it is always a balance of speed and accuracy we strive for, and the techniques used are based on the ratio of how fast to go versus how many points can be scored. On this we weigh our quest for the answer to the shooting stance question.

For those who don't have the foggiest idea about what we're discussing, let me explain. The Weaver stance, named after one of the pioneers of practical shooting, Jack Weaver, is based on a push-pull effect to (theoretically) stabilize the gun for fast, close-range defensive shooting. It is claimed by those who preach its ben-

efits that it enables you to control heavy recoiling handguns.

Using this stance, a right-handed person places his left foot forward of the right with your body turned about 45° from a perpendicular line to the target. The right hand holding the weapon pushes forward against the left supporting hand, which pulls backward. Both arms, as originally developed by Jack Weaver, are sharply bent and the head is tilted down to see the sights.


Now of course there are variations of the basic Weaver stance such as the Modified Weaver taught by Ray Chapman, the first IPSC World Champion. Ray keeps his right arm straight with the left still bent and pulling into the line of the right arm. I'm sure there are other variations, but this is the most popular.

The Isosceles stance has found a wide following in PPC competition and also in medium-speed, medium-accuracy matches like the Bianchi Cup.

The Isosceles gets its name from the isosceles triangle which has two sides of equal length. The true Isosceles would, then, have both arms fully extended representing the two equal legs of the triangle with the head straight up and the feet placed shoulder width apart, square to the target, to form the base leg of the triangle. This stance is also called a Turret Stance as the idea is for the shooter to pivot from the waist to engage targets laterally, thus

Continued on page 76

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.41 ACTION EXPRESS

By Charles E. Petty

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

Three years ago the shooting world was informed of a brand new cartridge that was ballistically similar to the 10mm Auto. It wasn't quite as hot, but was intended for the conversion of existing 9mm pistols.

The cartridge was the brainchild of Evan Whildin of Action Arms who reasoned that a medium bore cartridge that could be used in existing 9mm pistols would be a big hit. He was right, but the reality didn't exactly turn out that way.

Whildin's cartridge used a case just a bit shorter than the .45 ACP with a first for American automatic pistols: a rebated rim. The rim dimensions were the same as those of the 9mm Luger and would, with a simple barrel change, let you make a real gun out of your 9mm.

The caliber was to be .41 and the new round was dubbed the .41 Action Express. To say that it created a lot of interest would be an understatement. Ammunition was loaded in Israel by IMI and we all anxiously awaited the barrels. Action Arms imported the AT-84 copy of the famed CZ-75 and would, they reported, have barrels soon. That was three years ago and some of the bloom has fallen from the rose since then, for things proved to be more complicated than first thought. So we waited.

Copying the CZ-75 9mm became something of a fad with most of





the work being done by Tanfoglio of Italy. Tanfoglio's TZ-75 in 9mm was imported by F.I.E. and so F.I.E. also jumped on the .41 Action Express bandwagon.

The holdup in the .41 AE came after it was learned that when you ream out 9mm barrels to accept the 0.435" diameter .41 AE cartridge and 0.410" bore, there simply isn't enough metal left for adequate safety margins.

Everyone went back to the drawing boards.

Smoke Without Fire

In the interim some barrels were made for 9mm Government Model pistols but they were temperamental and functioning was less than reliable. Some gunsmiths, by dint of lots of work and more than a little luck, have been able, they allege, to make the Government Model conversions work. But most of the rest of us have had ammo and nothing to shoot it in.

For a time it was a repeat of the 10mm story. There was more than a little appeal to the original concept, especially for those of us who are not rabid 9mm fans, for it would bring a reasonable level of power to guns of the "wondernine" configuration.

All of the attention that has been paid to the ergonomics of the newer 9mm pistols has produced some that feel really good, so the .41 Action Express conversion seemed like a great idea. But, as I said, that was over three years ago and one quickly tires of hoopla.

Smoke without fire.

There have been plenty of times in firearms history when a good idea withered and died because of "unavoidable delays."

.41 AE At Last!

But the result, the F.I.E.'s Tanfoglio TZ-75 Series 88, was worth waiting for. The redesign includes beefing up the barrel, but the most visible changes are in the slide.

The heavier recoil of the .41 AE produced extremely high slide velocities and increasing the weight of the slide was found to be one of the best means of moderating recoil. The difference



isn't something you'd notice unless you happen to have one of the other guns for comparison, but then you can see that the slide is a bit thicker.

The slide also has an integral barrel bushing and front sight which replace the screw-in bushing and staked-on front sight of the original model.

There are some small changes in the frame as well. Most important is the relocation of the manual safety from its prior position on the slide to a much more convenient location on the frame. The safety still will permit "cocked and locked" operation for someone so inclined.

A firing pin safety has also been added. A lot of folks cuss these,

Continued on page 87



LOADING DATA .41 ACTION EXPRESS

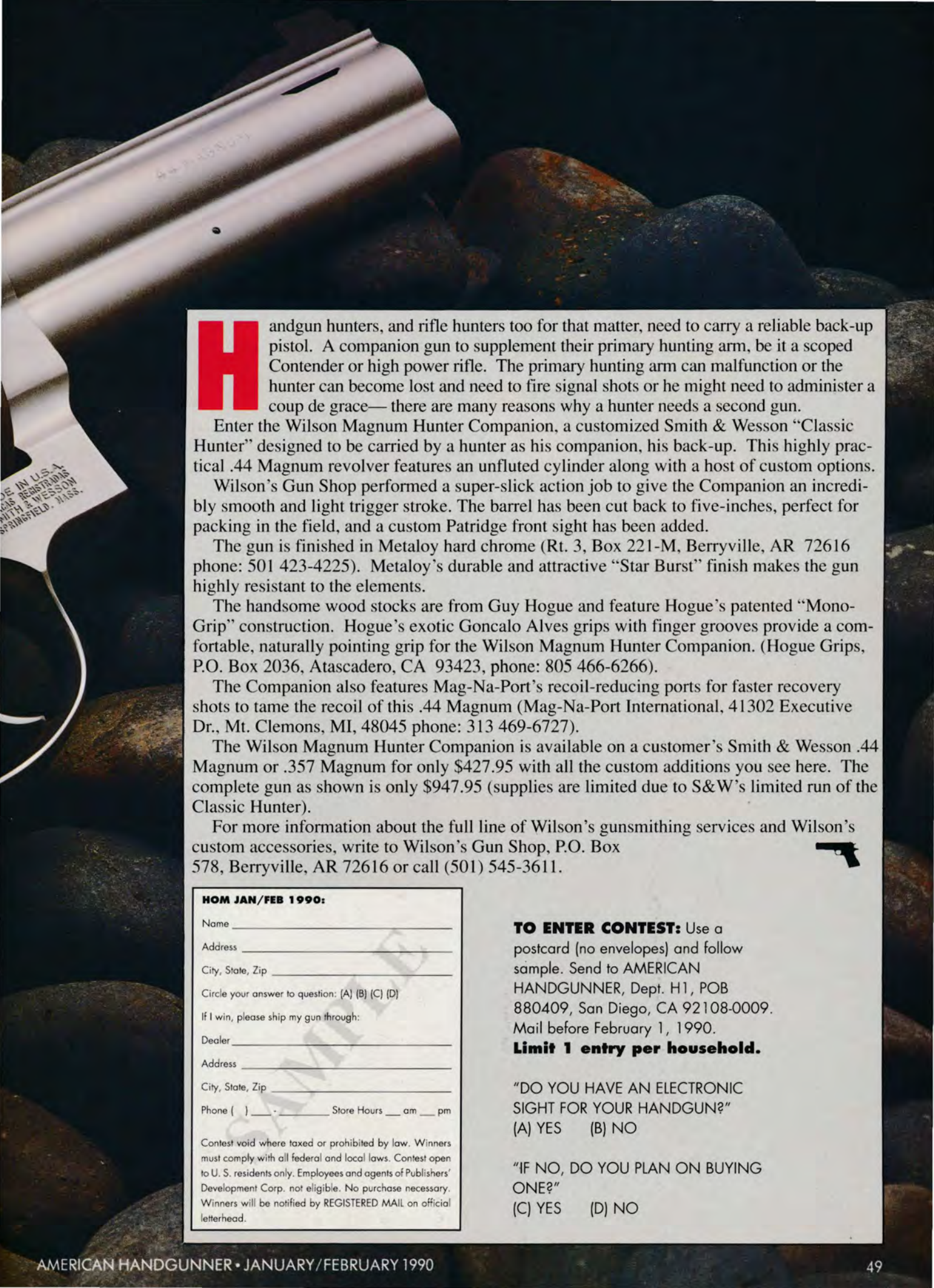
POWDER	CHARGE	CASE	PRIMER	BULLET	VELOCITY
AA #7	11.0 grs.	IMI	W-W	170 SIERRA	1100 fps
BLUE DOT	10.6 grs.	IMI	FEDERAL	170 SIERRA	1156 fps
W-W 473AA	7.6 grs.	IMI	FEDERAL	170 SIERRA	1151 fps
W-W 540	8.6 grs.	IMI	W-W	170 SIERRA	1059 fps
AA #7	11.0 grs.	IMI	W-W	160 HARRISON	1117 fps
UNIQUE	6.0 grs.	IMI	W-W	220 CAST	980 fps
AA #7	10.5 grs.	IMI	FEDERAL	170 CAST	1200 fps



You Can Win A

WILSON MAGNUM HUNTER *Companion*





Handgun hunters, and rifle hunters too for that matter, need to carry a reliable back-up pistol. A companion gun to supplement their primary hunting arm, be it a scoped Contender or high power rifle. The primary hunting arm can malfunction or the hunter can become lost and need to fire signal shots or he might need to administer a coup de grace—there are many reasons why a hunter needs a second gun.

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Wilson's Gun Shop performed a super-slick action job to give the Companion an incredibly smooth and light trigger stroke. The barrel has been cut back to five-inches, perfect for packing in the field, and a custom Patridge front sight has been added.

The gun is finished in Metaloy hard chrome (Rt. 3, Box 221-M, Berryville, AR 72616 phone: 501 423-4225). Metaloy's durable and attractive "Star Burst" finish makes the gun highly resistant to the elements.

The handsome wood stocks are from Guy Hogue and feature Hogue's patented "Mono-Grip" construction. Hogue's exotic Goncalo Alves grips with finger grooves provide a comfortable, naturally pointing grip for the Wilson Magnum Hunter Companion. (Hogue Grips, P.O. Box 2036, Atascadero, CA 93423, phone: 805 466-6266).

The Companion also features Mag-Na-Port's recoil-reducing ports for faster recovery shots to tame the recoil of this .44 Magnum (Mag-Na-Port International, 41302 Executive Dr., Mt. Clemons, MI, 48045 phone: 313 469-6727).

The Wilson Magnum Hunter Companion is available on a customer's Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum or .357 Magnum for only \$427.95 with all the custom additions you see here. The complete gun as shown is only \$947.95 (supplies are limited due to S&W's limited run of the Classic Hunter).

For more information about the full line of Wilson's gunsmithing services and Wilson's custom accessories, write to Wilson's Gun Shop, P.O. Box 578, Berryville, AR 72616 or call (501) 545-3611.



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"DO YOU HAVE AN ELECTRONIC SIGHT FOR YOUR HANDGUN?"

(A) YES (B) NO

"IF NO, DO YOU PLAN ON BUYING ONE?"

(C) YES (D) NO



CAL 380

COLT'S PT. FA. MFG. CO.
HARTFORD, CT. U.S.A.



Lady's Choice

Custom Colt .380 ACP

By Massad Ayoob

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

At both Bianchi Cup and Second Chance last year, Bill Laughridge and his associate Chris Hagemann had an intriguing little pistol on display. It looked like a gun only smaller.

Chris had taken a Colt Government Model .380 and given it the same treatment that their Cylinder & Slide Shop gives to bigger Government Models of 9mm, .38 Super, and .45 persuasion for Steel Challenge, IPSC, and bowling pin shooting respectively. It was the single most-handled gun in the display.

It was, God help us, cute.

There are certain words that should never be used in the same sentence. These include "government" and "intelligence," "fair" and "fight," "friendly" and "fire" and, I would submit, "cute" and "gun." My feeling has always been that any gun that was cute would automatically be low on



Delicate yet dangerous, the Laughridge custom Colt .380 nestles discreetly in a lady's purse. Like a loyal German shepherd, it is peaceful when left undisturbed but can be deadly when provoked.

my list of serious-business firearms.

I fear that I stand corrected.

When Chris came to work with Bill, the latter had been thinking about a miniature comp gun and the former had been thinking about it more seriously. Bill gave Chris the go-ahead, and Chris built the wee .380 up with an expansion chamber recoil compensator he'd designed and built himself.

The grotty, heavy trigger was brought down to a nice 3½ pounds or so, with a little bit of takeup left in by

intention for reasons we'll discuss later. The interior contact surfaces were deburred and polished.

The itty-bitty factory sights were replaced with fixed Colt Officers ACP style, the white dots blacked out in deference to the overwhelming preference for all-black sights expressed by owners of bigger comped Colts. The mag well was bevelled for quick reloads.



The front strap of the grip was beautifully checkered, the backstrap stippled all the way to the back edge of the grip tang. A steep, very slightly ramped, carefully serrated front sight was installed on the compensator.

The Colt Government .380 is not a pistol Laughridge sees a lot of. Most of his business is the two guns he's famous for: the Browning Hi-Power 9mm and the full-size Colt automatic, both usually ordered as street defense guns. Bill was, however, familiar enough to realize that the scaled-down Government in .380 moves the magazine release button to a point where the average-size male hand will accidentally drop the mag if the shooter fires with a locked-down-thumb hold.

The factor concerned me, since I teach that solid

hold at LFI just as Ray Chapman and John Shaw do at their schools. Chris Hagemann had beefed up the mag release spring to prevent this potential disaster. His solution works. The test gun was the first Colt Government (or Mustang) .380 this writer has fired that did not cough up its magazine every time you squeezed it.

Women and Defense

The mention of the female hand is intentional. Women with defense on their mind constitute the single fastest-growing segment of the "new handgun owner market." Bill and Chris noted that even non-gun-owning women at the shoots with their spouses would walk by, catch sight of the little .380, and start to handle it.



Small enough to be carried discreetly in a lady's purse, the Laughridge custom .380 handles well in small, feminine hands. The .380 ACP might not be the most potent manstopping cartridge, but a flurry of those little Silvertips would certainly make an impression. The compensator makes rapid fire easily controllable.

Handgunner's John Lawson.

Coming to terms with the fact that your daughter is a revolver person is easier than having her become a drug addict, I suppose, and I am comforted by the fact that her latest firearms infatuation is with the .357 Magnum caliber. I expressed no disappointment that she passed up the .380.

But for every woman like my wife and daughter, there are many who find the snap and blast of a .38 Special small-frame or a 9mm Parabellum, let alone a Magnum, to be intimidating. Enter the Hagemann

Cylinder & Slide .380 Custom.

The recoil of this compensated pistol is markedly less than a stock .380 of the same make or any of similar size. The compensator works. To me, it's almost like shooting a .22 rimfire.

This gun engenders comments. Lots of comments. A gun that's a conversation piece, as this one is, engenders pride of ownership. That in turn enhances the possessor's motivation to enter more deeply the world of the gun. In short, we're talking a pistol with proven ability to turn women who don't especially care about guns into fledgling pistol enthusiasts.

The Truth About Guns

Maybe some of these women will shoot them in

Let's not forget that the average female hand is about one finger digit in length shorter than the average male hand. The baby Colt fits them perfectly. The slight slack Chris left in the trigger reduces the chance of an accidental firing under stress.

My wife very nearly bought this gun. She loved the feel. The only reason she didn't was that she couldn't reconcile herself to the de-escalation from .38 Special and 9mm Parabellum to .380 ACP in a defense gun.

I next tried my 11-year-old daughter. It fit her small hand perfectly and she shot the gun amazingly well. However, Cathy doesn't care for autoloaders even though she started her handgunning career at age 8 with a Beretta 950 BS customized by



If the customized Government Model .45 is the ultimate fighting handgun for a man, surely a miniaturized version would be the ultimate for a woman. This customized .380 mini-Government Model sports many of the same features of a full-size .45 tricked out for gunfighting, like the hi-viz sights (below) contrasting against a serrated slide. The front strap (left) is checkered for a non-slip grip. The compensator (facing page) is of the "expansion chamber" design that's proven itself the best.



fun matches. They won't be entering them in IPSC competition, because the .380 doesn't make the power floor for even minor caliber. More to the point, though, the gun encourages them to get out and shoot.

This makes the new owner more skilled and more confident with the pistol. While the .380 is not my first (or second, or tenth) choice in a fighting caliber, there is no gainsaying two basic truths.

TRUTH ONE: A .380 that's with you when danger threatens beats hell out of a .45 that was left at home.

This fact came home to me one night in New York City when I was running in a radio car with a couple of tough black cops and the call came over the radio, "10-30 (armed robbery) in progress, two black males with guns, there now."

There on police union business instead of police department business, I was technically not legal to carry and was therefore armed with a pair of Nikon cameras. I cleared my throat as the driver wheeled the radio car toward the "gunmen there now" scene, and the cop on the recorder side handed me

his backup. It was a .380 Walther PPK-S loaded with 95 grain ball ammo.

Normally, this would be my idea of a good hamster gun, but under the circumstances, it felt like the thunderbolt of Zeus as my formerly unarmed hand closed on it. The gunmen were gone when we got there, but the feeling of comfort remained.

Women's wear does not give the latitude for carrying big guns that menswear does. The female who can carry a .380 like this daily is better off than the one with a 9mm Luger in the dresser.

TRUTH TWO: A hit with a good .380 round beats hell out of a miss with a .44 Magnum. A .380 is easier to shoot well than, say, a snubnose .38 Special revolver, and this Cylinder & Slide baby comp is incredibly easier to shoot.

.380 Stopping Power

Though people like me put down the .380, studies by Detroit Police sergeant Evan Marshall indicate that a good hollowpoint .380 like the Winchester Silvertip (the best stopper of conventional .380's according to both Evan's casefiles and

mine) or the Federal 88 grain JHP (a close second place on both lists) is a better fight-stopper than roundnose lead .38 Special or 9mm Parabellum ball.

Alas, the Colt Government .380 does not always work 100% with a fully loaded magazine of Silvertip. Download by one, and the reduced mag spring tension will allow the tip of the JHP to clear the front of the magazine and cycle on every shot. Cylinder and Slide, and LFI separately, have seen a lot of Silvertip jams in Colt .380s.

Colt has recently announced a new-configuration magazine for the little GM that is "guaranteed" to feed with a full cargo of Silvertip. But lacking any samples, I simply switched to Federal hollowpoints and PMC ball when Silvertip choked in the test gun. MPP (Maximum Pocket Pistol) loads from Personal Protection Systems, Ltd. duplicated Silvertip performance and, though more expensive, worked fine thanks to the plastic hard-ball-shape nose cap.

Since there's no competition this gun is eligible for nationwide, we didn't check heavily for accuracy. We did note that groups were tighter, partly because of the improved trigger pull, than the stock GM .380 we used as a comparison gun.

Dollars and Sense

Let's talk dollars. Our test gun, duplicated on a brand-new Colt Government .380 would still cost

under \$1,000. That's cheap for a compensated custom pistol from a big-name gunsmithing house, and is in the ballpark with factory-stock prestige .380s like the Heckler & Koch.

If you have a Government .380 of your own or can get a good deal on one, the custom work — which C&S estimates will take about six months — goes like this:

Trigger Job: \$45.00

Compensator Package: \$250 including the Officer's ACP sights, front sight, and insured shipping.

Stippling/Checkering: \$50 for the frontstrap, \$50 for the backstrap.

Bevelled mag well for speed reloading: \$27.50

Internal polish, deburr, and throating: \$54.50

Radius and Tension extractor: \$10.00

The total package for converting your Government .380 Colt, to make it just like the test gun, adds up to \$487 — not bad at all for turning a good little pistol into a unique little shooting machine.

We're talking a gun that might interest a distaff loved one who hitherto showed little interest in the technology you've been wanting to turn her onto. That in itself is a value we can't put a dollar price on.

This is one of the most interesting pistols I've played with in a while. Perhaps there is a place for cute handguns after all.

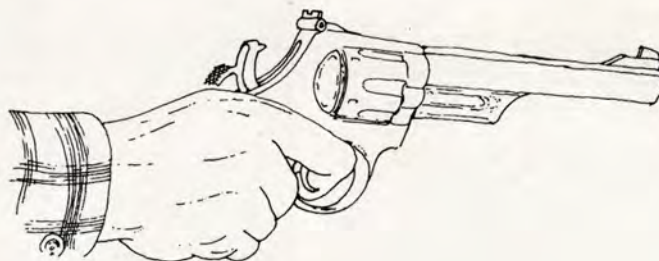


HANDGUNNING HINTS

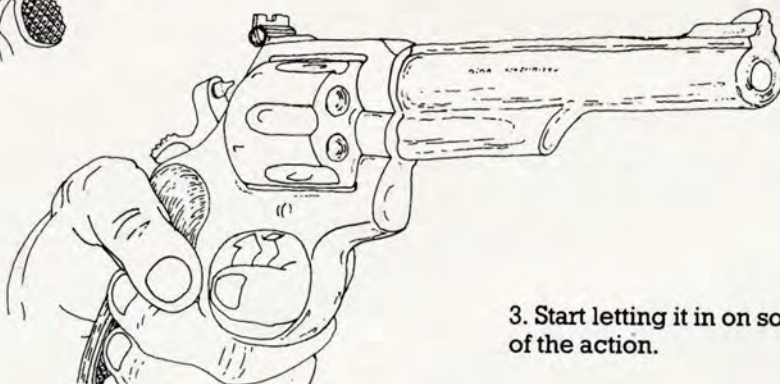
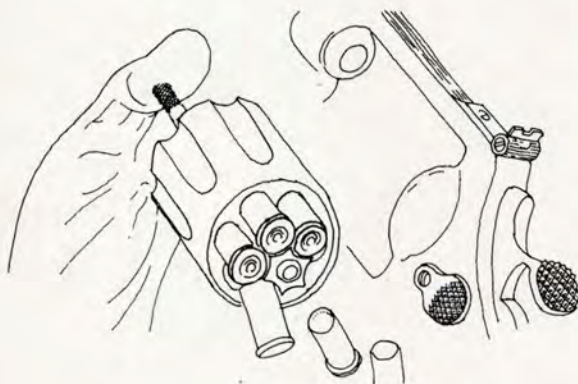
Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton

Some Off Hand Remarks

1. Getting a chance to spend more quality time with your handgun getting ready for the big hunt?



2. Well don't forget the off hand, the one that's always helping out while the other has all the fun.



3. Start letting it in on some of the action.

4. Because events other than injury may conspire to ruin a shot by the practiced hand, teach the off hand to hold and fire your handgun.



5. Then, perhaps, you won't have to try so frantically not to miss.

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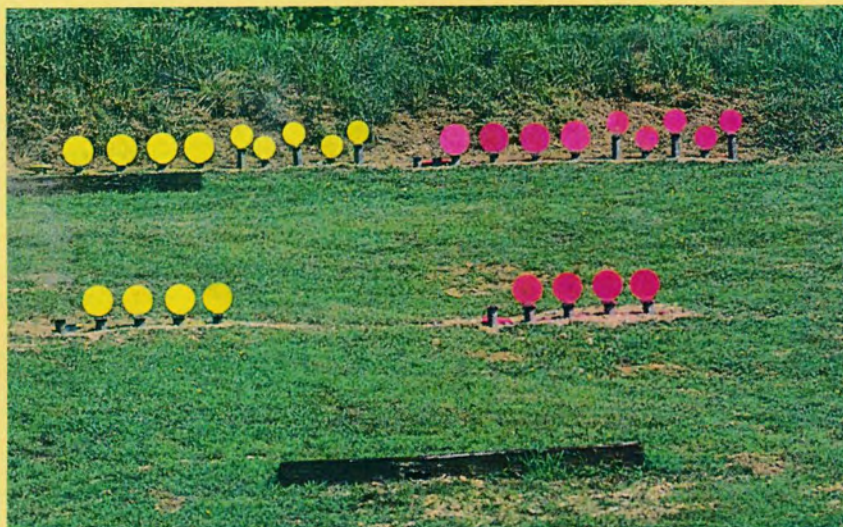
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THE MASTERS

By Cameron Hopkins

Photos by Nyle Leatham

Who could fully appreciate the exhilaration that Sir Edmund Hillary felt when he finally scaled the peak of Everest? Maybe only another mountain climber could relate to the avalanche of emotion that must flood through a man whose every fiber ached to achieve this dream of conquering a distant peak. Or maybe anyone who has struggled to attain a difficult goal could empathize with Sir Edmund. Maybe a competitive shooter named Brian Enos knows *exactly* what the British explorer experienced as he surmounted Everest.

Brian Enos scratched and pulled and clawed his way to the top of the most demanding pistol tournament on the professional circuit. He is the 1989 Master, the greatest all-around handgun shooter as determined in this multi-discipline test of marksmanship and grace under pressure called The Masters.

The pinnacle has eluded Brian for two years, but he relentlessly pushed ahead with a rigorous training program designed to beat what for him was the tough North Face—the gruelling Precision Event of bullseye shooting in The Masters.

The local Quincy paper proclaimed in its front sports page headline, “Enos Sheds Bridesmaid Image.” If there is a record for standing right up there at the alter, but not taking the vows of a pistol champion, it’s the 33-year-old handgunner from Mesa, Arizona.

Brian has placed second *eight* times in major professional matches. He has



finished in the top five— actually the top four, second through fifth— of the IPSC Nationals virtually every year since he began competing. He was second in the 1988 Masters, fifth in 1987 and ninth in 1986.

He finished second in the 1989 Steel Challenge and come up just a few points short in the Bianchi Cup several times. He has, in fact, *won* only two matches— back-to-back Bianchi Cups in 1983 and 1984. But they've been mighty lean years since.

Until 1989, that is, when this remarkable marksman of Team Springfield captured the \$20,000 cash prize as the 1989 Master. It was a long, rocky climb to the top.

Precision Event Blues

In the 1988 Masters, Brian won two out of three stages, the Action and Long Range Events. Despite this considerable lead over the field, he still had to face the ego-crushing Precision Event where even an NRA National Champion bullseye shooter can barely hit more than half of the ridiculously difficult targets.

Dem ol' Precision Event Blues struck Brian with a vengeance in last year's Masters. He hit a disappointing 13 out of 45 shots, a disastrous score that toppled him from first place. With the crest of the mountain clearly in sight, he was denied on the final ascent.

Brian returned to the sweltering Ari-



Jerry Mikulek (left) won the Action Event with a box-stock Model 27. He's incredibly fast with that wheelgun and is widely hailed as "the next Ed McGivern." He shot the Action plates (far left) in record time. The Precision Event (below) determines The Master because of its inordinately difficult course of fire--those little dots in the background are the targets! A Browning Buck Mark (right) was used in the Precision Event. The match took place (bottom) in the scenic PASA Park in Illinois.





Vance Schmid (above) won the Long Range Event, but his specialty is speed shooting. Long Range guns (top) include "ski guns" with odd protuberances.

zona heat with a burning resolve to conquer the Precision Event. Those frustrating little aspirins that they call targets would become his passion to beat.

The first thing he did was deep-six his customized Ruger Mk. II pistol and replace it with a finely executed European target pistol, a Pardini Fiocchi. He fired top-of-the-line CCI Green Tag ammo in the Italian tack-driver.

With his new gun he practiced. And practiced and practiced and practiced and then practiced some more.

The months rolled by, and still he practiced. The seasons changed and there was Brian out alone in the desert, practicing. Christmas came and went, the calendar swept past Easter and still Brian Enos worked diligently on practicing the Precision Event

The Masters Unfolds

The first week of August every year heralds a grand event that uplifts the quiet hamlet of Barry, Ill. The Masters International Shooting Championship unfolds annually just down the road a piece from this quaint Middle American village where Mayor Ed Venicombe knows each and every one of the 500 residents on a personal basis.

The main intersection in town meets at

the corner of Smith & Wesson Avenue and Remington Drive. Mayor Venicombe passed a special ordinance renaming two main streets after the two Co-Sponsors of The Masters who contributed a generous \$25,000 each in cold, hard cash.

Drive out of Barry a few miles and you reach the picturesque "shooting park" of the Pike-Adams Sportsman's Alliance, the site of The Masters. Four years ago PASA was a hog farm with muddy pens full of pig wallows, an oink-oink here and a oink-oink there. As the dream of a multi-discipline handgun match slowly took shape in Smith & Wesson Historian Roy Jinks' mind, he sought out a range suitable to hosting what would become the richest, most prestigious pistol tournament ever. Roy finally settled on this hog farm, showing the same vision and foresight in picking the site of the match as he had in conceiving it.

The earth movers and dozers snorted and spewed diesel fumes as they transformed the mud wallows into what is now a beautifully landscaped park. Lush oak trees, centuries old, tower over the manicured lawns surrounding the shooting ranges of PASA Park. Before the first shooter arrives for The Masters, literally hundreds of man-hours of volunteer labor

have gone into preparing the park to host The Masters.

All-Around Handgunner

The match consists of three events which represent the three major disciplines of competitive handgunning. From the sport of metallic silhouette shooting comes the basis of the Long Range Event. From the sport of bullseye shooting comes the Precision Event. And from the several match formats comprising "action" shooting (Steel Challenge, IPSC, Bianchi Cup) comes the Action Event.

The Masters seeks to unite the three handgunning sports and crown the world's greatest all-around handgunner. This was the fourth annual Masters and the previous three champions have come from the ranks of IPSC and bullseye. So far silhouetters have not performed particularly well in The Masters for reasons unknown.

For the first time The Masters would see members of the Army Marksman Unit compete. Capt. John McNally, one of the finest shots to ever squeeze a trigger, was rumored to be the odds-on favorite to win the Precision Event based on his record—he shot for America in both the Seoul and Los Angeles Olympics and he would have shot for us in Moscow except for President Carter's boycott.

While many observers tagged Capt. McNally with the Precision Event, no one gave him much chance for winning the over-all title. Pundits looked to previous



Yes, that's a "handgun" but it's got a rifle action (Sako) and rifle barrel (Douglas) and rifle scope (Tasco).



Here's a typical "steel gun" made for shooting light loads fast, fast, fast. It's usually a .38 Super with 125 gr. bullets, always built on the classic 1911.

champions for repeat performances with three-time NRA National Civilian Champion Allen Fulford being a popular choice to win his second Masters. Some said IPSC shooter and Team Springfield member Ken Tapp would win again which, I suppose, would mean that his back-to-back victory would be a double-Tapp.

A few savvy insiders placed their bets on the bridesmaid. Brian Enos would finally scale the peak that has eluded him for so long.

Race Guns For Race Day

Gentlemen, the range officer intones, you may load and make ready. As the shooters retracted slides, racked bolts, unlatched cylinders and inserted magazines, they "made ready" the most wonderful assortment of exotic custom guns. Race guns for race day.

There were "banana guns" and "ski guns," "Bianchi guns" and "steel guns," "comp guns" and "rail guns." It's almost

as if the pistolsmiths of America collectively embarked on a frenzy of creative abandon in making some of these truly radical guns.

Banana guns are for the Long Range Event and feature an elongated front grip that extends down to provide a stable rest for shooting from the prone position at the 6" plates at 200 meters. Because the rules state that a gun can only have one vertical grip, these forward protuberances are shaped like bananas to cleverly meet the letter of the law while at the same time supplying an ergonomically stable platform for precisely aimed fire.

A ski gun is similar. Both are bolt-action handguns, usually built on a Sako action modified to accept a 10 round magazine. The ski gun sports an extended vertical, um, ski that is horizontally oriented, again to circumvent the rule about "one vertical grip."

(An aside— all this business about vertical-grips-made-horizontal reminds me of one of my favorite quotations from Oscar Wilde. "Dancing is a vertical expression of a horizontal desire.")

A rail gun is a handgun built on the same premise as the ultra-accurate rifles used in the Unlimited class of formal Benchrest competition. A rail gun is, essentially, a completely free-floating barrel with the action suspended on a mammoth block that resembles a rail of a train track.

As the term is used at The Masters, a

Guns and Gear of the Top 16

Place	Score	Cash Winnings	Name	Precision Event	Long Range Event	Action Event
1	274.62	\$24,750.00	Brian Enos	Pardini Fiocchi	XP-100 7BR (Tasco 4x)	Springfield .38 Super
2	239.15	\$9,450.00	Allen Fulford	High Standard	Ultra Light Arms 7BR (Tasco 4x)	Colt .38 Super
3	238.99	\$6,420.00	Carter Jones	High Standard Citation	XP-100, 7BR (Burris 5x)	S&W Mod. 10 .38 Special
4	235.08	\$6,820.00	John Pride	Pardini Fiocchi	French Rail Gun 7.62x39(Burris 6x)	S&W Mod. 659 9mm Luger
5	234.59	\$6,390.00	Ken Tapp	High Standard M-106	Nu-Line Custom Sako 7 TCU (Burris 7x)	Springfield .38 Super
6	232.14	\$5,700.00	Michael Kanazawa	Browning Buckmark (Tasco)	T/C Contender	Colt 9mm Luger
7	231.20	\$2,350.00	Doug Koenig	Pardini Fiocchi	XP-100 (Burris 7x)	Springfield .38 Super
8	227.74	\$4,175.00	John Farley	S&W Model 41	T/C Contender, 30-30 (Burris 5x)	Colt .38 Super
9	223.41	\$1,620.00	Curtis Shipley	Browning Buckmark	XP-100, 7BR (Tasco 4x)	Colt .45 ACP
10	220.37	\$970.00	Floyd Wine	High Standard	XP-100 (Leupold 4x)	Colt .38 Super
11	218.60	\$870.00	Frank Glenn			
12	217.67	\$760.00	Al Sinclair	High Standard Citation	XP-100	Colt
13	217.36	\$1,660.00	Edward Williams	Colt/Kart	Ultra Light Arms (Simmons)	Colt .45 ACP
14	217.21	\$670.00	Wayne Bowker	High Standard (Aimpoint)	XP-100	Springfield .38 Super
15	216.38	\$5,800.00	Vance Schmid	High Standard Citation	XP-100, 7BR (Tasco)	Colt .38 Super
16	214.91	\$3,350.00	Dennis Crocker	Pardini Fiocchi	Ultra Light Arms (Burris)	Colt



These wild and wacky, um, handguns surfaced in the Long Range Event. Ultra Light Arms (above) with a 10-shot box magazine; Nu-Line's (right) "banana gun" on a Sako action; modified AR-15 (below) functions manually; John French custom Sako "rail gun" (bottom) with forward grip.



rail gun refers to one of the ingeniously redesigned "forward grip" pistols of master gunsmith John French.

The French Rail Gun is based on a Sako 6mm PPC action with the entire trigger mechanism completely rebuilt from scratch to extend the trigger forward some 10 inches. There it is mounted to the monoblock of aluminum that serves as the "rail" of the rail gun, just in front of a Pachmayr Compac grip. There are no less than eight pivot points in the handmade trigger linkage system!

Among the other race guns are less exotic fare than what is found in the Long Range Event. A steel gun is a

lightweight semi-auto 1911 used at the Steel Challenge, invariably chambered in .38 Super and featuring one of a variety of compensator designs depending on the maker.

A Bianchi gun is a match-barreled Smith revolver, very similar to a PPC revolver. There weren't too many wheel-guns picked for the Action Event because everyone knows that a semi-auto pistol is unbeatable in a straight-up speed shooting contest (more on that later).

The Action Event saw all sorts of comp guns, customized 1911 pistols with features for combat shooting including a barrel compensator system like the Wilson Accu-Comp, Nastoff SuperComp or Brown Maxi-Comp.

The race guns of the Precision Event are all hot-rods from Europe. It's sad to say, but America simply doesn't make a first-class .22 target pistol. Fairly good target pistols, yes, but nothing like the Walther GSP, the Hammerli P-280 or the Pardini Fiocchi. (Actually we *did* make a really good target pistol, High Standard. But High Standard went belly up years ago.)

As you can see in Nyle Leatham's photographs, the European match pistols feature ergonomically tailored grips that can best be described as custom fitted "wooden gloves." The magazines on the Walther GSP and Hammerli P-280 sit forward of the trigger guard, like a Broomhandle Mauser. The triggers on these Olympic-quality .22's are adjustable about 15 ways from Sunday.

The sights are, of course, fully adjustable with extremely fine micro-clicks of windage and elevation. The

front sights are replaceable with different widths and heights to suit your preference. The rear sight blades are relatively *huge* compared to the standard American rear sight blade as found on, say, a Smith Model 41.

Oh yes, and these Continental race guns *shoot*. We're talking 10 shots easily inside a dime at 25 yards and inside a quarter at 50 meters. This is important when you remember that those absurdly minuscule targets of the Precision Event are a scant 1.77" in diameter, placed at 50 meters.

They're Off!

The Masters is shot in three days, one event each day. For the benefit of the thousands of spectators who flock to the shooting festival from miles around, the match organizers arrange for the top shooters to shoot together in one squad. This is handy too for the local television crews that covered the news of The Masters every day.

On the first day, the Gold Squad—as the top-flight group is called—fired the Long Range Event. Next day they shot the Precision Event and the last day was



Brian Enos sealed his win with a great score on the Precision Event. Guns of the Precision Event (below) are typified by an Aimpointed Pardini target pistol (below) or a customized High Standard (bottom).



reserved for the Action Event.

There's just not much to the Long Range Event for a Gold Squad member. You need to hit in the mid- to high-thirties (out of 45 possible plates) to stay in the running. If you bust over 40, you'll win the event. It all boils down to the "standing" phase of the three-part event in which the contestant fires 15 rounds at 75 and 100 meters. The remaining 30 rounds are fired freestyle.

The standing phase entails 10 shots in 90 seconds at 9" plates at 75 meters and 12" plates at 100 meters, firing alternately between the distances. The next portion is five shots in 60 seconds at 9" plates at 100 meters. A good shooter will hit 10 or more out of the 15 targets.

The standing phase is where the Long Range Event is won and lost, although there is one other bank of five targets that can't quite be called a "gimme." It's five 6" plates at 200 meters, shot in 60 seconds from a freestyle position.

These five six-inchers come as part of the second phase in which 15 targets at 100 and 200 meters. Here is where the ski guns and banana guns and rail guns come into their own. The rules prohibit the gun from touching the ground, but other than that, the only limitation on what you can do to achieve a steady position is limited only by your imagination, and your skeletal structure. Actually, looking at some of the contortion acts

Continued on page 100



MOD. 92 F - CAL. 9 Parabellum - P
BERBEN CORPORATION N.Y.-N





M-10 BERETTA 9mm

American Handgunner SPECIAL REPORT

by James E. Fender

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

Plagued with rumors of unsafe "slide failures," the Beretta 92 weathered a storm of controversy until it was vindicated in the Army's newest M-10 pistol test. Once again the Beretta 9mm became the official sidearm of the United States Armed Forces, but nagging questions remained about its safety and performance. Until now.

There has been a lot of heat and smoke, but very little illumination generated during the controversy concerning the alleged "slide failure problems" with the Beretta 92F 9mm semi-automatic pistols being produced as new handguns for America's armed forces.

American Handgunner has reviewed the pertinent documents assembled by the United States General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative arm of the United States Congress, in its inquiries into the Beretta "slide failures." Additionally, officials of the Beretta

U.S.A. company, federal government officials, representatives of ammunition manufacturers and civilian law enforcement agency officials have been interviewed by *American Handgunner*.

In the interests of reporting the facts of this controversy to our readers, *American Handgunner* is presenting the following details of its investigations to "set the record straight."

Fact: In April of 1985 the United States Army, acting as the central procurement authority for all our nation's armed forces, awarded a contract to Beretta U.S.A. for the production of 315,930 92F 9mm pistols (the "M9" contract). Contract value was approximately \$75 million taxpayers' dollars. As of fiscal year 1988, the contract had increased to 321,260 handguns, and a value of some \$77.3 million. The "M9" competition tested and evaluated 9mm semi-automatic pistols submitted by eight firearms manufacturers.

Fact: As of April, 1989, the Army had accepted delivery of 146,000 Beretta 92F/M9 handguns, or approximately 45% of the M9 handguns in the contract award.

Fact: In late 1987, a sample of endurance-tested M9 frames developed microscopic indications of a fatigue crack after being fired some 5,000 rounds. These microscopic cracks occurred on a strap and were cosmetic in nature, and in no way affected performance, safety or function. However, the problem was immediately identified and corrected as part of Beretta U.S.A.'s preshipment screening process. No cracked M9 frame has ever been shipped to the Army. No cracked M9 frame has ever been reported in the field.

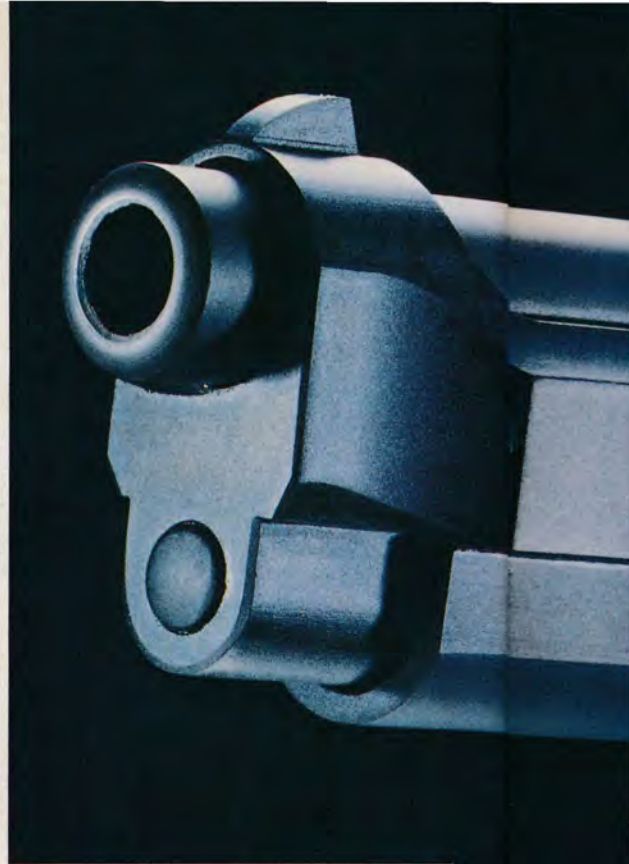
Fact: The Beretta M9s have experienced slide failures. The GAO has reported that, as of October, 1988, a total of 16 M9 or military owned 92Fs purchased prior to the award of the M9 contract were known to have failed during field use and laboratory testing. Four failures occurred during field use, and 12 during laboratory testing. Field slide failures occurred in the

hands of Navy special warfare personnel. The military considers the slide failures to be serious because when the slide fails without warning personal injury can result, and has resulted.

Fact: No slide failures have been reported from Beretta 92 series 9mm handguns in civilian hands, either in the United States or elsewhere.

Fact: The specifications of the Army contract awarded to Beretta USA called for the slide of the M9 handgun to function without cracks or breaks for a minimum 5,000 rounds.

Fact: The Army was required to initiate another round of competition for an additional 140,000 9mm handguns (the "M10" contract). This competition was for an additional quantity of 9mm handguns to satisfy newly identified service requirements. This new round of



testing and evaluation was not the result of any perceived failure of the Beretta M9 to meet contract specifications. Rather, this competition resulted from specific language contained in the Continuing Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1987 (which provided monies to fund the operations of the Federal Government). The amendment mandating another round of competition was placed in the Appropriations Act through the intervention of members of the Massachusetts congress-

Continued on page 92

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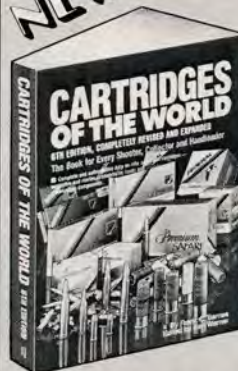
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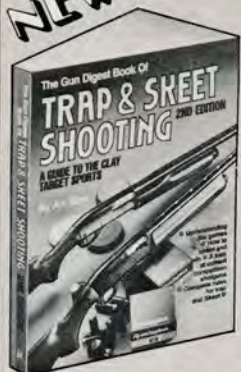
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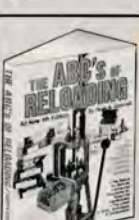


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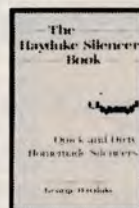
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LEATHAM'S COLUMN

Continued from page 42

resembling the turret of a tank.

Proponents of either technique are quick to point out the benefits of their respective style and the disadvantages of the other, but this completely misses the point. Each was developed to address a specific set of needs and each does a wonderful job.

The trick here is to analyze both styles from a theoretical standpoint and adapt features from both for your style of shooting. If one particular stance is most effective for all applications, it would have to be a hybrid of the two. Just like any other tool, when it's designed to do a wide range of jobs well, it won't necessarily do individual jobs best.

The original Weaver stance was designed to engage multiple targets at various angles at close range. And to this day, the two bent arms pushing and pulling are unsurpassed in efficiency at this task.

"But Rob," you scream in protest, "everyone knows you're an ardent practitioner of the Isosceles stance. How can you say such blasphemy?"

Well, when the test calls for greater accuracy and recoil control than the Weaver provides, the answer is simple—straighten up those arms, keep the head upright and don't push-pull. It's silly to assume that you must do it wrong one time so it can be done correctly another.

When the targets are close and spread out quite a bit, you're going to engage them quickly with less emphasis on accuracy. In other words, squirt!

I'm talking roughly from contact distance out to 10 yards: Keep your arms bent and this will position the gun closer to the pivot point of the body, thereby reducing the pendulum effect of the gun's weight when swinging from target to target.

This also allows the arms to soak up the gun's weight and momentum at the end of swinging. Keep the legs bent. Bend slightly at the waist. But don't over-exaggerate these points!

The swing, you will notice, is actually permitted by the joints in the hips, ankles, knees and waist. In these instances the gun will actually be carried below the line of sight to enable the shooter to better see the targets.

Obviously this technique is only for use when accuracy requirements are outweighed by speed. What happens when the targets go from 15 yards on out? Simple, we dig into our bag of tricks and pull out the necessary skills for the job at hand—the Isosceles.

For accurate shooting, we don't need the ultimate in rapid target acquisition. We need greater control for repeat shots

as it will take longer to get the gun aligned on the target. For this you extend your arms, straighten your posture to a more relaxed stance, and concentrate on marksmanship fundamentals.

Arms are straight and not tensed up. A firm grip on the gun, but not a death grip, which reduces your sensitivity and response in the arms, shoulders and, especially, the hands.

No tight neck, stomach or face. Keep the muscles relaxed. Keep your weight on the balls of the feet, don't bend backwards but stand with a slight, almost unnoticeable, forward lean.

This is the stance we call the Isosceles and it is the best for medium- to fast-paced accuracy. You'll control the gun much better than with the Weaver.

There are, of course, numerous variations and combinations of the two techniques, and all have some merit. The point is to not limit yourself to any one technique. If the ultimate goal is increased performance, then remember that versatility is the key.

In my previous column appeared the statement "cooper in your barrel is not a beautiful thing." This was an inadvertent typo and should have read "copper." It was not my intention to disparage Jeff Cooper who has contributed greatly to the shooting sports.





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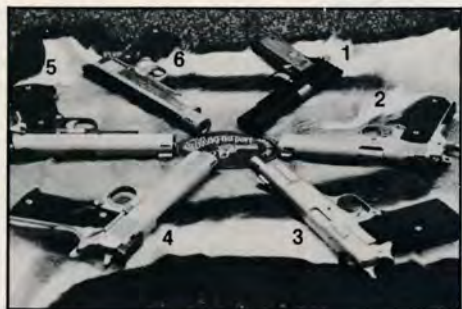
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HANDLOADING

Continued from page 39

The term "bullet pull" refers to force required to overcome the crimp and neck tightness of the case before the bullet can begin to move. We are routinely warned that heavy loads generally work best with heavy crimps, but there is no good way for the average handloader to really know when his crimp is right or too heavy.

Too much crimp can be a bad thing too and can cause pressure to climb in an otherwise safe load not to mention shortening case life. Carrying crimping to the extreme can lead to deformed bullets and poor accuracy.

It's hard to measure the amount of crimp applied and say, for example, apply 0.010" crimp. It would be nice if we could but it's hard to get an accurate measurement with the dial calipers most of us have in our loading setup.

The factories have special equipment to measure bullet pull and they often use neck sealing compounds to increase tension on the bullet. Those methods are beyond the scope of even the most sophisticated handloader.

Some sources have used the terms light, medium and heavy to describe the degree of crimp, but these lack definition and my idea of a light crimp may be someone else's medium. And, without a chronograph and careful accuracy testing, you probably won't be able to see much difference in everyday shooting.

One thing that I've found to be more consistent is Redding's new Profile Crimp die. This is a separate crimp die that actually is a combination of both roll and taper crimps in the same die. I've used it with both .44 and .357 Magnum loads and found that velocities are generally more consistent. Other reports have shown significant accuracy improvement with really heavy loads such as those favored by silhouette shooters.

If you're limited to a roll crimp one of the best hints I can offer is to try to duplicate, visually, the amount of crimp present on your favorite factory load. Most of the magnum loads have a pretty hefty crimp and you may be able to come close to approximating it visually.

RCBS Calipers

One of the most used tools in my loading room is a set of dial calipers. I use them for all sorts of things but most frequently it's for determining when cases need trimming and measuring the overall length of loaded ammo to be sure it's correct.

Dial calipers fall into two categories: cheap and expensive. The cheap ones are usually made of plastic and are serviceable enough but are susceptible to warping and losing accuracy. The other side of the coin are the expensive stainless steel

products.

Now there's a good compromise. RCBS has an imported stainless steel six-inch caliber that is both accurate and modestly priced. They aren't as pretty as my expensive pair but they are accurate. The best evidence of this is the fact that the folks at RCBS are using them in their manufacturing.



HANDGUN HUNTING

Continued from page 38

form? Have you de-burred the primer flash hole? Do you choose your "accuracy" cases by proven methods or just shoot whatever you pick up?

In addition the gun itself may be tuned by reducing end and/or side play of the cylinder, aligning chambers to the bore, reducing cylinder gap, recutting the forcing cone, etc. These little jobs can easily reduce the group's average size by 50%.

However, if the cylinder mouths or bore/groove dimensions are greatly over-size, forget it. The gun will never be a good shooter. Nor will a chamber bored in the wrong place or a misplaced bolt notch.

The single shots are another subject that would take at least another article. Let's just say the optics and ammunition are the limiting factor (remember, perfect shooters) in the better single shots and remember there might be some pretty crummy ones out there.

Handgun Optics

I firmly believe handgun optics are in their infancy—at least I feverently hope so. Compared to the optics available for rifles, they have a long way to go.

I doubt if the *average* handgun scope out there is physically capable of better than 1.5" hundred yard groups. Many of them break before they can be sighted in on .44s or harder kickers. Others jump their elevation or windage adjustments in recoil.

The service policies of some of the companies are horrible. A service representative of one of the companies a HHI member had a problem with told him to "get rid of it at a gun show."

Some aren't worth putting on anything. Some of the mounting systems available are pure abominations.

When it comes to hard kickers, at this point, I can recommend only Bausch & Lomb and Leupold. They aren't perfect, but they'll do—and they fix what breaks, as does Burris.

The 7x Burris is the best varmint scope and the 10x probably the best ammunition testing scope. I have little use for variable power handgun scopes which are big, heavy and have more parts to break and are usually on the wrong power when you need them as well as some having radical changes in eye relief,

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exit pupil and field of view.

In looking for the solution to an accu-
racy problem, in my opinion, if the gun
has a scope on it that is the first place to
look to eliminate that possibility of a
problem.

Ammunition

No firearm will shoot accurately with
lousy ammunition. A handloader must
know how to load outstandingly accurate
ammunition for the gun to produce out-
standing accuracy.

If you don't know how to load it, I'd
suggest reading up on benchrest rifle
loading techniques as many of them are
applicable to loading accurate ammo for
both revolvers as well as single shots.

In short, the secret is quality compo-
nents and uniformity of loading. That
does *not* mean weighing every powder
charge. Benchrest competitors never
weigh each powder charge—they use
accurate powder measures.

Case preparation—primer pocket
depth, flash hole diameter and deburring,
case lengths the same and cases from the
same lot selected for uniformity—will
make a great deal of difference in what
accuracy is produced.

If you, like most handloaders, use
whatever cases you have and load them
indiscriminately you are guaranteed
mediocre to poor results.

In recent factory ammunition testing I
participated in, some ammunition gave as
much as *ten-inch* larger groups at 100
yards than others did. Very little of it
came even close to five inch groups in the
test guns which were both ordinary and
highly tuned revolvers.

The best handloads gave close to two
inch groups from the tuned guns and the
same tuned guns didn't ever break five
inches with factory ammo. Ammunition
tailored to the specific gun will beat ordi-
nary ammo every time.

Shooting Technique

Bench shooting technique is also open
to question. Generally speaking, unifor-
mity of grip is the most important part of
technique.

Some guns will shoot okay with the
butt rested on a bag—others won't. T/Cs
usually string their shots vertically if the
butt is allowed to come into contact with
a bag in recoil. The heavier the caliber,
the more pronounced this seems to be.

The prescription in your glasses
should be properly ground in the portion
of the glass ahead of the eye. As you look
progressively toward the edge of the glass
the prescription changes and can have a
pronounced effect on your shooting.

Did you check the parallax in the
scope? Do that by blocking the gun on
the sandbags with the crosshairs on a tar-
get and move your head around. If the
crosshair moves on the face of the target
the scope has a parallax problem at that
distance.

Are you one of the guys who thinks he has to pound the gun into the sandbags after each shot? You can't get uniformity that way.

If you haven't gotten the idea that superior accuracy usually occurs because someone knows what to do and does it properly, you'll never get it except by accident.

Visit some of the benchrest rifle shoots in your area and watch the accuracy experts produce truly tiny groups. And then watch the beginners, and some of the old timers having a bad day, shoot two inch groups with the finest equipment money can buy. Then re-evaluate what a mass produced revolver should do.



SILUETAS

Continued from page 37

better relationship with foreign shooters who are virtually ignored by most of us. Perhaps each separate country will be able to be brought under IHMSA and somehow provide them with a membership paper in their own language. This would be a tremendously important undertaking.

8) Where IHMSA stands as to permanent ranges is not yet clear and will not be until the financial condition of IHMSA is really known. Officially, IHMSA is committed to both ranges. At the present time we have an Eastern Range that needs repair and a Western Range that I feel personally is an albatross around our necks with the necessity of "safety baffles" use.

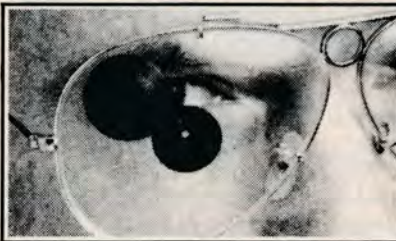
Scotto hopes to be able to bring the Eastern Range to the point of hosting the 1990 Internationals. The Western Range is debt-ridden. It has a caretaker and is being maintained for future use. The big question that Scotto must face will be whether or not IHMSA can really afford to pay the Gates family the money that is owed on this property.

9) Membership is a major priority with Scotto. It must be rebuilt to former and even greater levels if IHMSA is to survive. Scotto is hoping the new attitude of IHMSA will bring back former members as well as attract new members to the fold.

Attitude is certainly a big part of it, but I hope the new leadership will realize that many long time members have dropped because of the simple, but unavoidable fact that they cannot see the sights well enough any longer to compete.

Here is a chance for a rules change that will not change the sport in any way but allow shooters to continue to compete as long as they can bend their bodies into Creedmore and hold up a gun. Namely, change the rules to allow optical sights.

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Keep it simple. Make Aimpoint and ProPoint non-magnifying scopes legal. Allow the industry to offer non-magnifying scopes for shooters who cannot see iron sights any longer. There is no great advantage, probably a disadvantage, for a shooter with good eyes to switch from an iron sight to a one power scope.

The rule could be written to accommodate those with eye problems by allowing participation in iron sights or scopes but not both.

From my contact with him, I expect Frank Scotto to be an ambassador of good will. One who preaches and practices sportsmanship and fair play to all, members, writers, and industry. He has high hopes that silhouetting can be brought back to its glory years. I think he is right.

I would offer a few other suggestions to the new president. Let's plan on getting together with NRA silhouetting and working hand-in-hand in every way we can. Let us also contact those clubs that have pulled out of IHMSA and see if they can be brought back into the fold. No doubt, Scotto has already thought of these and they will be dealt with.

A few months back I would not have given IHMSA as good a chance at survival as the proverbial snowball. That has changed, and I wish both Frank Scotto and Scott Lindley all the best and I applaud their efforts. And as I sign all my correspondence: "Gentlemen, Good Shootin' and God Bless" 


COP TALK

Continued from page 35

ented by this cop's ferocious counterattack that his marksmanship went down the drain, and most of the brutally powerful slugs went through only soft flesh on the periphery of the cop's body. Seconds later, the gunman had fallen under the savage counter-assault of his intended victim.

Both men are alive today. Both carried .357 Magnums when last I talked to them. The rookie cop who was blown away with a boo-boo had well and truly learned that his mind mastered his body: he had psychologically been preparing himself to take the heaviest blow imaginable and keep fighting.

The second smiled grimly and said, "I've been shot five times, but I haven't been killed yet. It didn't make me feel like Superman. On the contrary, it showed me how easy it would be for me to die and leave my family alone. There is one very powerful thought in the back of my mind: stay up, stay fighting, stop them from hurting me any more, and go home to my family. They can go to jail or to the morgue, but I *am* coming home."

Words to live by. 

INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

Continued from page 28

1050. But the great RL-550B remains the workhorse in the line, fast and durable enough for the big-volume loader and still, at \$249.95, priced within reach of the casual shooter. Available in some 115 different calibers, it is truly a remarkable machine.

Phelps-Ramar, Inc. (13320 Southridge Industrial Drive, Dept. AH, Tavares, FL 32778) is currently making an automatic case feeder that can significantly increase production rates on the Dillon 450B, 550, and 550B models.

With this case feeder in place the operator's left hand indexes the shell plate and sets the bullets in place, while the right hand need never leave the operating handle except to occasionally replenish the supply of cases. Price is \$139, including shipping within the continental US.

The test sample was installed on a model 550. Installation took about two hours, following the clear instructions provided. Two small modifications are required. The roller bracket/shell platform must be fitted with two braces (included) and the two little "bumps" that guide the cartridge spring are filed flat. The spent primer catcher tube must be trimmed slightly for operating clearance. These parts, incidentally, are quite inexpensive so if you wish to return the machine to original condition it won't cost much.

An electric drill is needed (the correct size bit is provided) and I found a Dremel Moto-Tool handy for reshaping the primer chute, though a file would do. Installation wasn't particularly difficult, but if you lack the time or inclination to do the job, send your press to Phelps-Ramar and they will do it for \$20.

Two case tube adaptors are provided to allow the case feeder to work with most popular autopistol and revolver cartridges. With the proper adaptor fitted, set the plastic feed tube in place and set the Freeloder funnel on top of the tube. This Freeloder is what makes real speed possible, as it is designed so that cases will only drop through it base first.

Cases then feed down the tube to the feeder assembly; as the operating handle is lowered a cam-actuated plunger slides a case into proper position in the shellplate.

The case feeder is well designed and made, using quality materials. The feeder body is made of aluminum, while any parts subject to wear are made of steel, with roller bearings used where needed. At least 12,000 rounds were loaded using this feeder, with no noticeable wear. Though a few minor problems were encountered, they weren't considered to

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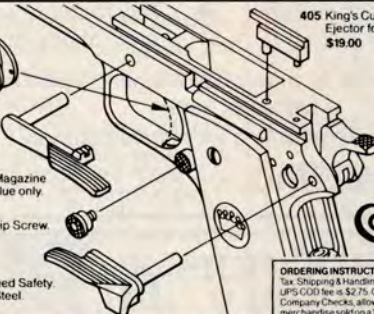
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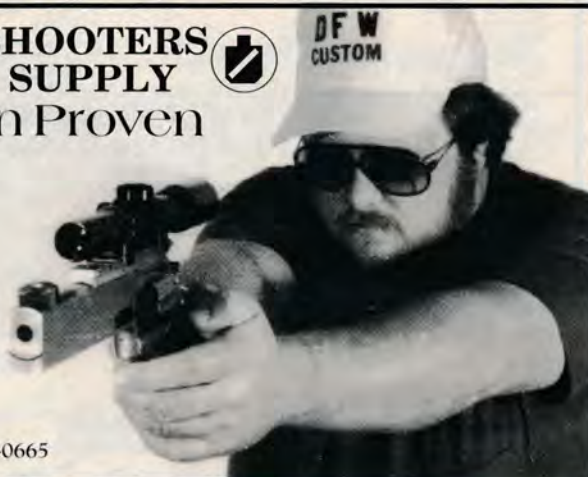
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be serious, and overall functioning was very good.

One problem inherent in the design is that the Freeloader funnel sits above the primer magazine, interfering with the plastic follower rod that is part of Dillon's primer Early Warning System. It's a good practice always to start with 100 primers in the magazine and the cartridge bin empty. With a little experience one soon can judge by eye when the cartridge bin has 75-85 loaded rounds in it. At that point I'd slip the primer follower in place. With only a few primers in the magazine the follower would now clear the funnel, actuating the system to give its usual warning buzz when only three primers were left.

Occasionally (on average, about twice per thousand rounds) a case would come down the tube base up and be fed into the shellplate. Obviously it's not going to get into the sizer die this way. These cases caused no real trouble, since as soon as resistance was felt on the operating handle I would stop, find the reason, and remove the offending case.

With this, or any other progressive machine, never lean on the handle if unusual resistance is felt. At best you'll crush a case and maybe break a decapping pin, at worst you'll seriously damage the machine. Instead, find the problem and fix it.

Another minor problem that occurred with about the same frequency (i.e., a couple of times per thousand rounds) was a case coming down the feed tube would catch on the case tube adaptor, stopping the flow of cases. A quick tap with a finger would clear this jam and get cases moving again.

The case feeder will work only with handgun cases, but can be quickly removed if you use the same machine to load rifle cartridges. Simply lift off the Freeloader and case tube, remove a single Allen-head screw that holds the feeder assembly, and lift off the assembly. Rifle cases can now be placed in the shellplate manually as usual.

Even allowing for the minor problems noted, this case feeder provided a worthwhile increase in production speed. In estimating speed, one has to distinguish hourly production rate from actual hourly production. Using the standard 550, with all components ready to go, I can load about 12 or 13 rounds in one minute. Under the same circumstances with the Phelps-Ramar case feeder I can load about 20 rounds, while with the big RI-1050 a rate of 33 or 34 rounds per minute is possible.

Theoretically this would mean hourly production of about 700, 1200, and 2000 rounds respectively. Of course, in reality this isn't possible. Primer tubes must be filled, the powder measure replenished, the loaded cartridge bin emptied, an occasional jam cleared, fresh boxes of components opened. And once in a while my

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nose needs scratching.

Besides, trying to go too fast is a good way to catch a finger in the machine, which can sting like crazy. Allowing for all these factors, my normal production rate with a standard 550 is about 350-400 rounds per hour, with the 550 with case feeder installed about 600 rounds per hour, and with the 1050, around 1000 to 1100 rounds per hour.

Phelps-Ramar guarantees that if the case feeder doesn't work, or you don't like it, they will fix it so it does work, replace it, or refund your money.

It should be noted that Phelps-Ramar has no connection with Dillon Precision, nor does Dillon Precision authorize any alterations to their products. Dillon's no-time-limit, "if it breaks we fix it free" warranty is unsurpassed in the business, but obviously they cannot and should not be responsible for damage caused by another maker's products.

Frankly I can't see any reason why the case feeder should cause any problems, but in the unlikely event it does you should expect to pay Dillon for any repairs required. For further information on this case feeder phone Phelps-Ramar, Inc. at (904)343-1414.

Dillon Precision is located at 7442 E. Butherus Drive, Dept. AH, Scottsdale, AZ 85260. To order, call toll-free, 1-800-4217632. (In Arizona, 602-948-8009.)

10-Round .38 Super Mags

Mag-Pack 8-shot magazines for the .45 ACP 1911-pattern pistol have been out for some time now and are well proven. The company is now offering 10-shot magazines and conversion kits for the .38 Super round.

Magazine bodies are made by Metal-form, in either blue or stainless steel. They come equipped with a base pad, and the competition versions also have a lead spacer to add weight and ensure the mag drops cleanly from the gun when the release is pressed.

Pete Viceroy, president of VIC International, (18056 Ledgepoint Place, Dept. AH, Strongsville, OH 44136) sent along a stainless competition model (retail price \$30.95) and a couple of conversion units (\$9.95).

The conversion units were fitted to standard Colt magazines. They consist of a Wolff magazine spring and a plastic follower that is dished out to help make room for the extra round. All three mags gave flawless functioning over the firing of several hundred rounds, seating and feeding properly and locking the slide back when empty.

I've heard that because of the relatively long plastic follower one should clean out any sand that gets in these mags, to prevent the follower from sticking. These mags were dropped in sand quite a few times (ranges are always located in sandy areas for some reason) without any problems occurring, though I suppose it's

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good advice to keep any mag clean.

Everything in this world has a price, and the price for the extra round capacity is somewhat more difficulty in seating a fully-loaded mag in the gun. Tested by the scientific means of pressing the loaded magazine down on a bathroom scale until it locked in my gun's mag well, I found it took 45-50 pounds pressure. A Shooting Star 10-rounder was virtually identical.

For comparison, a Metalform 9-round mag would seat and lock with 10 pounds pressure. The lesson is that if one uses extra-capacity mags in matches, and most IPSC shooters do, they should always be used in practice as well. That way one becomes used to the amount of force needed to seat the mag properly.

I've also found that when using very light loads for steel shooting competition, such as a 125 grain bullet at 950 fps, 10-shot mags can press hard enough against the bottom of the slide when fully loaded to retard the action of the slide and cause a feeding failure when the first shot is fired. When using these light loads I always load nine rounds only. With normal loads this problem never occurs.

IPSC shooters consider extra-capacity mags as standard equipment. The Mag-Pack conversion kits and complete magazines work perfectly and are excellent products. They can be ordered from VIC International, or write to Mag-Pack Corp., P.O. Box 846, Dept. AH, Chesterland, OH 44026.

Idaho Mag Pouch

For carrying those mags in competition, probably no carrier is as popular as Safariland's model 077 case, generally called the "Idaho" case. These trim, light and secure mag cases are made using Safariland's Safari-laminate process, so that once tension is adjusted with the tension screw, it never changes.

Safariland must have sold bushels of these, for even shooters using other brands of leather generally wear at least one Idaho on the belt buckle for their primary reload. Safariland has made them even more versatile by offering its models 700-2 and 700-3 Clip-Bars. (I thought a clip bar was a drinking establishment that overcharged its patrons, but not in this case.)

These clip bars are simply plastic-coated steel bars that carry either two or three Idaho cases at an almost unlimited variety of angles. For example, three mags can be stacked vertically, worn horizontally or anything in between. The bars also hold the mags out from the body, making them easier to grab for a fast reload. Suggested price on these very useful items is \$19.95. See your Safariland dealer, or write Safariland at 1941 South Walker Avenue, Dept. AH, Monrovia, CA 91016.



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Continued from page 46

but they are undeniably a worthwhile feature in a carry gun—they prevent accidental discharge if the gun is dropped.

The gun sold by F.I.E., in-stock now, is available only as a kit with both 9mm and .41 AE barrels, separate (and different) magazines and two distinctly different recoil springs.

I have never been a fan of convertible guns, usually they are a compromise.

The recoil spring for the .41 AE is a compound arrangement of two springs within one another and is assembled as a captive unit. This is sound engineering for it makes it easy to tell at a glance which spring is which. The 9mm spring and guide are similar to those found on other 9mm pistols.

One of the original attractions of the proposed 9mm/.41 AE conversion was the ability to use the original 9mm magazine, but this is another case where the reality turned out to be something different.

While, at first glance, you would think it would work, the rebated rim of the .41

AE sits below the 9mm magazine lips. Since the slide must contact the rim to strip a round from the magazine you can imagine the consequences if the case sits too low. Embarrassing, so the .41 AE magazine's lips are 0.040" wider than the 9mm to let the cartridges ride a little higher.

Almost all of the original idea's attractions have gone by the board and the cynics among you are probably chuckling to yourselves about now. Instead of being able to convert your 9mm pistol to a real

gun, now you have to do the unthinkable and convert a real gun to 9mm.

You need a special magazine and all the existing 9mm pistols are doomed to remain 9mm. I was one of the skeptics myself until I got my hands on the new gun.

I have never been a fan of convertible guns; usually they are a compromise and end up doing neither thing very well, but this one may change my mind.

The .41 Action Express is an intriguing cartridge that offers power slightly above the hottest .45 ACP loads and it has the undeniable appeal of newness. But it turns out that the 9mm half of the

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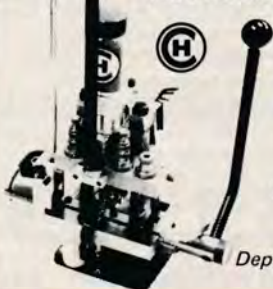


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.41 AE Ballistics

Shooting the TZ-75 in .41 Action
Express is a pleasant surprise. Recoil
simply isn't that severe. It's more than
9mm but not nearly as stiff as .45 ball.

Ammo, by the way, is only available
from Action Arms (P.O. Box 9573, Dept.
AH, Philadelphia, PA 18124) and I think
it's sort of an interesting twist that F. I. E.
has the guns first instead of the inventor!

Action Arms has two .41 AE loads in
the distinctive blue and white Samson
boxes: a 170 gr. hollowpoint and a 200 gr.
FMJ.

In the early publicity for the .41 AE
the ballistics were announced to be 1250
fps for the hollowpoint and 1100 fps for
the FMJ. But those figures have been
moderated a bit and the ammunition
available right now produces 1085 fps for
the hollowpoint and 950 fps for the 200
gr. load from the TZ-75's 4.5 inch barrel.

I don't think this should be viewed as
a criticism, for it is rare for ammo to
deliver as much velocity from a real gun
as it does in a test barrel. We must also
take into account that there has been little
work with the ammunition because there
have been no guns to shoot it.

It may well be a repeat of the 10mm
story where we saw a flood of compo-
nents and ammo after the guns were
finally on the market so we will reserve
judgement on the ammo for awhile.

TZ-88 Ergonomics

The most attractive aspect of the pack-
age is not in terms of blinding speed but
in loads that provide a bit more power
than the .45 in a *controllable* package.

One of the most appealing features of
the TZ-75 is the shape of the grip and the
trigger location. Unlike some of the won-
derdames where transition from double to
single-action requires the facility of a
contortionist, this one, at least in my
hands, feels natural.

One reason is that Tanfoglio has elimi-
nated quite a bit of the slack in the single-
action pull. On many other guns there is
considerable takeup in the trigger, some-
times almost an inch, that ends up with
the trigger all the way at the back of the
trigger guard, but the Tanfoglio design
minimizes the amount of grip shifting
required for the SA/DA transition.

Careful examination of the new TZ-75
reveals a gun that is well finished in
matte blue. The fixed sights are equipped
with a three white dot arrangement that
shoots to point of aim.

The triggers are quite good with a
double-action pull of 13.5 lbs. and single-

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What About Accuracy?

Now let's talk about accuracy. Over the last few years there has been a significant improvement in overall accuracy among 9mm pistols. A few years ago pie-plate groups no better than five-inches at 25 yards were common and a lot of us believed the cartridge wasn't capable of much better. Turns out we were wrong.

The manufacturers have improved their guns and ammunition has gotten better as well. A gun that shot groups that large today would not be smiled upon. Nowadays the average is more like three-inches, but when I fired the first group with the 9mm barrel installed in the TZ-75 I thought it must have been a fluke for it measured 1.5".

Well, so did the second group and when all was done the average for 15 consecutive five-shot groups with three different brands of factory ammunition was 1.9 inches. This is the best accuracy I've ever seen from a factory 9mm gun and threatens some of the custom jobs.

This dramatic result is, in large part, attributable to the excellent fit of barrel and slide. On an earlier model there was a generous 0.012" clearance between barrel and slide at the muzzle, but the current model has a snug 0.003" clearance.

That sort of accuracy is a tough act to follow and the .41 AE didn't shoot quite as well. The 170 gr. hollowpoint averaged 2.5" and the 200 gr. FMJ delivered 3.0".

Had the 9mm not shot so very well I would have been quite pleased with this sort of accuracy and it is certainly acceptable. I feel sure this picture will improve if ammunition developments continue.

Handloading the .41 AE

As you might expect, there is very little loading data for the .41 AE because it's so new. The only published data is in Accurate Arms' loading booklet and it is limited to just a couple of their powders.

There have also been some other articles that have listed a few loads, but it's important to remember that none of these have been pressure tested and all data, including mine, should be used with due caution.

Most of what is available has been worked up in 5" barrel Government Models so don't expect to get exactly the same velocities if you shoot them in the TZ-75, although the results seem to be pretty close.

Right now there is a real scarcity of bullets and even though the 210 and 220 gr. .41 Magnum bullets from Sierra and Hornady might be usable, they're probably too heavy to be attractive.

Cast bullets are also pretty heavy although Redding/Saeco has a couple of lighter bullets in the works.

For now, all I've got to offer are several loads using the Sierra 170 gr. JHC and

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one custom bullet. The custom maker is Harrison Bullet Works (6437 E. Hobart St., Dept. AH, Mesa, AZ 85205) and its 160 gr. JHP looks like a real winner. It's the only bullet available right now with the proper design for use in automatic pistols and it functions perfectly.

Even though the 170 gr. Sierra bullet has quite a bit of exposed lead on the nose, it functions quite well in the TZ-75 and there were no malfunctions with the handloads using it. Accuracy of the handloads using the Sierra and Harrison bullets was equal to the factory loads, but so far I haven't found anything that is better.

Actual loading of the .41 Action Express is really no different than any other automatic pistol cartridge and the rebated rim poses no problem in tool adjustment. Dies are available from Redding and RCBS and a taper crimp is recommended.

I did my loading on a Dillon 550B. Dillon can supply an expander/powder funnel although they do not offer dies at this time.

All loading data presented here should be considered *maximum* and it is important to remember that none of these loads has been pressure tested with the exception of the 11.0 gr. load of Accurate Arms #7 with the Sierra bullet.

None of the other loads showed signs of excessive pressure and were safe in my gun but you should reduce all charges by 10% and work up carefully.

Hurry Up And Wait

In its brief, checkered past the .41 Action Express has gone through all the emotions. At first there was the unrestrained joy of being able to use your existing 9mm pistols with the new cartridge. But when that didn't work out there was a depressing letdown.

Then we had to wait in nervous anticipation for another three years. Then came the guns, but nobody can remain enthusiastic that long, not even the most dedicated handgunner. Another bummer.

People who were once enthralled with the idea switched their interest to other things—the 10mm, for example. As those "unavoidable delays" kept getting longer and longer, I would have bet the ranch that the .41 Action Express was a dead duck.

After the long wait, imagine my surprise when the gun came and turned out to be worth waiting for. To their credit, the folks at Tanfoglio did it right. It would probably have been easy for them to hustle out with some half-baked compromise, but they spent the time to really study and engineer what amounts to a total rework. Don't you just love it when a plan comes together?

For more information, write to F.I.E., 4530 N.W. 135th St., Dept. AH, Opa-Locka, FL 33054.



WICHITA



Revolver Comp

An add-on unit for S&W revolvers

By Charles E. Petty

The growing popularity of NRA Action Shooting, dominated by revolvers, has brought about a demand for compensators and barrel weights for revolvers that was formerly limited to automatic pistols. Wichita Arms has just introduced such a product for installation on the popular Smith & Wesson L-frame Models 586 and 686. Actually there are two: Revolver Comp and a larger version known as the Slab Comp.

The Slab Comp is a truly massive piece of steel that practically surrounds the revolver's barrel. It is attached by a single screw which requires that the underlug be drilled and tapped. Although installation is basically simple it is *not* a project for the home workshop equipped with nothing more than a hand drill.

In fact, installation can be deceptive for the slab comp fits rather snugly along the barrel and unless the hole is drilled perfectly, the screw that holds the whole thing on may bind and cause problems.

Probably the most difficult part of the installation is simply figuring out a way to hold the gun so that the barrel is at absolute right angles to the drill. It wouldn't be so bad if the frame didn't get in the way almost any way you try to hold it, and I suspect that a lot of gunsmiths will simply remove the barrel so that they can hold it correctly.

I had Leonard Baity, one of *American Handgunner's* Top 100 Pistolsmiths, do the installation and, after he finished, his

suggestion was, "Let Wichita install the next one." Since they offer this service for \$30 and probably have a special fixture to make the job easy, that's probably the best idea.

The Slab Comp weighs 13 ozs. and is available for 6" barrel Smith & Wesson L-frame revolvers and also the Ruger GP 100 with 6" heavy barrel.

There's also a smaller Revolver Comp that only extends back on the barrel a bit and can be used on 4" as well as 6" barrels on the same models. They are only available in blued finish.

Wichita reports a documented 52% reduction in muzzle jump for the Slab Comp and 30% for the smaller Revolver Comp. I have no reason to doubt these figures, for shooting my 686 with the Slab Comp installed was almost like shooting a .22.

Using wadcutter reloads there was virtually no muzzle rise and only a bit when firing the .38 Special service loads that represent the Bianchi Cup power floor. I could detect no change in accuracy from levels measured prior to installation.

The attractiveness of the Slab Comp (\$105.95) and Revolver Comp (\$59.95) is that, after you get that pesky hole drilled, they can be removed easily and would allow someone to slip on the comp for a match and then remove it to return the gun to condition for duty or other use. It's a nice idea (available from Wichita Arms Inc., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 11371, Wichita, KS 67211).



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BERETTA 9MM

Continued from page 69

sional delegation.

Fact: The GAO investigations have reported a high correlation between the ammunition used and the round count at slide failure. No commercial ammunition is believed to have been involved in any slide failure. The four field slide failures recorded by the GAO are reported to have occurred after an "unknown" number of rounds had been fired through one pistol; 30,000+ rounds had been fired through a third pistol; and 4,500 rounds had been fired through the fourth pistol.

Fact: The GAO issued a report stating that there were no indications the Army had attempted to cover up any M9 problems.

Fact: While allegations have been made that the M9 evaluations were biased toward Beretta those allegations have not been substantiated by the GAO after extensive inquiry. Two United States Federal Court decisions also have held there was no evidence of bias.

Fact: Beretta has designed, and the Army has accepted, an Engineering Change Proposal (ECP) for a "slide retention device." Shipments of M9 pistols from the Beretta USA Accokeek, Md., factory have been resumed for pistols fitted with the slide retention device. Pistols so fitted are being issued to military units without restriction. M9 pistols currently issued to military units have a 1,000 round limitation, after which a new slide must be fitted. However, retrofit kits which consist of a new slide assembly, the retention device and a left grip panel are being shipped to the Army. The kits will be installed by armorers at intermediate level maintenance facilities, and once retrofitted the 1,000 round limitation will be removed.

The above information was obtained from reports issued by the GAO and the United States Army. They are public records to which anyone may have access.

But what does all of this mean?

Is there a potential risk that a handgunner firing a Beretta 92 series or M9 pistol will be injured by a slide failure? Perhaps, just as there is a risk that a handgunner firing a Browning Hi-Power, a Steyr GB, a Smith and Wesson semi-auto, a Colt Government Model or a Ruger P85 will be injured by a slide failure.

But the risk is so insignificant that it cannot be computed. This is just another way of saying that nothing in life is totally risk free.

Slide Failure

Only a handful of the more than one million slides currently fitted to the Beretta 92 series of 9mm handguns have experienced slide failures. There is still a

great deal of controversy surrounding the reason why the slides failed.

But slides did fail—and rather than attempt to stonewall the facts, Beretta and the United States Army forthrightly acknowledged there was a problem and set out to find the cause.

The design, the manufacturing techniques, the ammunition used were all investigated. Nothing was summarily dismissed. The people at Beretta strongly suspect that the ammunition used in the pistols which experienced slide failures was the cause of the failures.

Army officials have stated that while the ammunition is always a factor that has to be considered, ammunition was not a primary cause of the slide failures. Beretta and the Army have devoted more than one year of analysis, and over \$1 million has been spent by the Army in a concentrated effort to find the cause. The results are inconclusive.

The Army did subject 12 M9 pistols selected at random to an accelerated endurance test. Each of the 12 M9 pistols was fired for more than 20,000 rounds—without any problems or slide failures.

The design, the steel used in the slide, the heat treatment, all metallurgical factors, were checked and rechecked. Nothing was found which would explain the slide failures.

Bad Ammo?

What about the ammunition, then? The particular ammunition which was being used when the majority of slide cracks and failures were detected in Army laboratory tests was non-NATO certified. There was a requirement that the M9 fire NATO-certified ammunition during testing. For training and operational purposes, any 9mm ammunition tested and accepted as meeting US and NATO specifications is authorized for use in the M9.

Please understand that Beretta is not accusing any ammunition manufacturer of having produced defective ammunition. However, after having eliminated design, manufacturing techniques and metallurgical factors as potential causes for slide failures, Holmesian logic would indicate that the remaining factor, the ammunition, had to be the cause.

I talked extensively with the representatives of the ammunition company which manufactured the ammunition used when the majority of slide failures in the laboratory occurred. They are as mystified as anyone at Beretta or in the Army as to the cause of the slide failures.

But their ammunition—as was all ammunition used in the laboratory tests—was manufactured to strict Army specifications.

At this point the reader is probably saying, "Well, just get some of that ammunition and test it." Unfortunately, all of the ammunition has been consumed, so there is no way to test it.

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So what caused the Beretta M9 slide failure problem? I don't know. Perhaps it will remain as intriguing a mystery as the assassination of President John Kennedy. Ten years from now handgunners may still be arguing just what caused these incidents of slide failure.

Additional information may come to light. For example, there have already been indications that the slide which failed in the field after an initially reported 4,500 rounds may have been fitted to another frame earlier in the slide's service life; and the actual round count at failure could have been much higher.

My personal belief—and I stress that this is my personal belief only—is that when fed 9mm ammunition manufactured to NATO and/or SAAMI specifications the Beretta 92F/M9 semi-automatic pistol will not sustain slide failures of such a nature that personal injury will result.

Please note that I did not say that slide failures won't occur. As with anything mechanical, a firearm subjected to long use can eventually be overstressed to the point that fatigued components will fail.

Years ago when I was active in NRA conventional pistol competition I visited the U.S. Air Force Advanced Marksmanship Training Unit (AMTU) at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, on several occasions. The armorers at the AMTU routinely received from Air Force pistol teams world wide semi-automatic pistols, mostly Colt Government Models in .45 ACP caliber, for rebuilding. Many of these pistols had developed minute stress fractures in slides and frames.

Subjected to enough further use, doubtlessly those minute stress fractures could have led to catastrophic failure of the pistol. However, the point to be made is that in the vast majority of cases, including of course the M9, tell-tale indications visible to the eye or the touch will signal the onset of a problem long before a catastrophic failure is likely.

The Beretta people are providing the slide retention device only for military M9s. The company has no plans to offer the slide retention device to civilians. The company's logic is impeccable: no civilian pistols have failed.

Police Reactions

But what do longterm civilian law enforcement agencies think of the Beretta 92 series pistol? At my request, Beretta furnished me with a list of law enforcement agencies with extensive experience in using the Beretta 92 series.

I contacted several law enforcement agencies to solicit their views of the Beretta 92 series. Special Agent Richard Tengstedt, Chief Firearms Instructor for the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, provided a reply which was typical of the responses I received from law enforcement agency personnel.

Special Agent Tengstedt's agency had purchased over 300 Beretta 92SBs, after

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initially testing all of the then available large capacity 9mm semi-automatic pistols on the market in 1981. His agency selected the Beretta over all other competitors for product quality and handgun reliability.

A significant number of these Berettas have well over 30,000 rounds of ammunition fired through each pistol. Special Agent Tengstedt told me that in all the time his agency has been using the Beretta 92SB the only parts requiring replacement have been several springs.

Special Agent Tengstedt advised that his agency inspects and cleans the Beretta 92SBs frequently—he believes in keeping any semi-automatic pistol as clean as possible—and no evidence of slide cracks have ever been detected.

M-10 Test

As readers of *American Handgunner* probably know by now, the Beretta M9 has emerged as the Army's choice for the follow-on 9mm handgun competition. The M10 competition used the same performance specifications and testing methodology used to determine the first contract award.

As such, the M10 testing and evaluation period was not as lengthy as the original M9 competition. Smith & Wesson and Ruger submitted sample 9mm pistols to the Army for evaluation in the M10 competition.

At first Beretta officials did not think that their pistol had to be retested, and no efforts were made by Beretta officials to prepare a lot of pistols for competition.

When the decision was made to retest the M9, Army inspectors selected 30 pistols on a random basis from stocks of M9 pistols held at Beretta's Accokeek, Md., factory.

The Army has stated that the performance of these randomly selected M9s was significantly better than either of the competing 9mm handguns. Thus, as things now stand, Beretta will supply the remaining Department of Defense requirements for 9mm service pistols.

Does this mean an end to the great 9mm handgun controversy? I for one fervently hope so.

There has been a lot of litigation over the Army's selection for the Beretta as the service pistol. Tempers and emotions have flared over imagined slights and wrongs. But it's time to put rumor and gossip behind and get on with the business of national defense.

Americans have the admirable trait of assembling the facts themselves and then making reasoned decisions. I believe that most Americans who seek out the facts will conclude that Beretta's faith in its 92F/M9 pistol has been vindicated by this pistol's selection to satisfy all remaining Department of Defense 9mm service pistol requirements.



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FAST AND FANCY

With ROB LEATHAM

By John Taffin

Arrangements were made to attend the Leatham Shooting Institute in Mesa, Arizona and spend three days taking the class in Competition Handgun Shooting offered by champion shooter, Rob Leatham. I had been in Phoenix, Arizona four years earlier and vowed never to return in the middle of summer. The temperature was 115° that first trip, and this Idaho boy just about succumbed. Going back was better. It never got above 112°! Oh, to have a franchise for GatorAde in southern Arizona.

I must say that the thought of going to a shooting school greeted me with no little trepidation. What if I couldn't hack it? What if I could not hit anything? Those guys are going to know me, I've got to be able to shoot! All these ideas went through my mind. As it turned out, Robby put everyone at ease, I made new friends, and we all learned a lot and had a great time in spite of spending three days outside under that Arizona sun.

I was the first to arrive at the shooting range and found Rob Leatham already setting things up for the day. The first contact with Rob was positive and he seemed to be a genuine nice guy and one who would be really interested in his students. The class would be small, myself plus three other students which would allow plenty of individual attention. Uh-Oh, that means everyone will see everything I do wrong! There go those thoughts again.

It was a great comfort to find that the office building at the range was air-conditioned and well stocked with cold drinks. This was going to be a long three days and a few comforts would help. Rob knew much more about the dangers of the Arizona sun than the rest of us and saw to it that we took frequent breaks during the day. "Go get a drink" became as important as "Stand By" and "Unload."

The men that I was to spend the next three days with arrived shortly and introductions were made all around. The other participants would be from three of the four corners on the Lower 48. From Florida came Eddie Ramirez, shooting a .38 Super built up by Otto Matyska of St. Louis, and carried in Ernie Hill Leather. Eddie has been actively involved in action shooting for four years and Rob judged

Class sizes are limited to six students (below) for maximum individual attention from Rob Leatham. Rob critiques each shooter's target (right) and provides personalized instruction for each student's skill level.



that he was right at the verge of breaking into the select group of top shooters.

California contributed Bob Jones, who had been a shooter many years ago, then got into motorcycles, and now was back into shooting via the action route for the past year and a half. Bob's choice was a Springfield Armory 10mm built up by J.M. Custom Guns and carried in a Safariland rig. His original choice had been a .38 Super but had trouble making the major power factor (bullet weight x velocity = 175,000) with it.

Tom Naes from Washington has also been involved in action shooting for one

and a half years and used a custom .45 Detonics carried in a Safariland rig. Tom had a lot of trouble finding the range site, but after three days had no trouble whatsoever finding the center of the target.

Instructor Rob Leatham carried a Springfield Armory .38 Super customized by Bill Wilson in an Ernie Hill rig and one of my first questions was: "Why not a .45?" He gave me four reasons: magazine capacity, less torque, less muzzle flip, and less recoil all aid in getting repeat shots on target much quicker.

Rounding out the group was yours truly with a custom Wilson .45 and I used both

an Ernie Hill rig and a Safariland rig during the course. So the total equipment tally for the group turned out to be two .45's, two .38 Super's, one 10mm, three Ernie Hill rigs, and three Safariland rigs. All handguns were equipped with compensators.

Being a great shooter does not necessarily make one a competent teacher; big league athletes rarely make successful managers or coaches. I need not have been concerned about Rob's ability as a teacher. He blended two essential ingredients that are necessary for a teacher to assure the best results—putting the student at ease combined with the proper level of concern. The first without the second will not work. Students need to feel comfortable about what they are doing but also need to be accountable.

During the next three days I found that Rob believed in the individual approach, and even though each of the participants fired 1200 rounds, each target of each shooter was examined and discussed individually. We learned.

It was a surprise to me, though it should not have been, to find that the basic techniques of action shooting are exactly the same as for all other types of handgun shooting, namely, trigger control, sight

alignment, and holding the gun as steady as possible. Add to this speed. Over and over, Rob stressed the same theme: "Where were the sights when the gun went off?" And we were also taught to concentrate on seeing where the front sight was after the gun went off—how did it recoil?

It is obvious that an action shooter can not be as precise about sights as a bullseye shooter. The trick is to combine speed with relatively precise alignment. Fast requires total concentration, and the tendency for beginners is not to shoot too slow, but too fast. Watch those sights.

Rob used the same simple three-step outline that every successful teacher, no matter what the discipline, uses. For each shooting drill, first, he told us what we were to do, often using a chalk-talk. Then he showed us with a live demonstration what we were going to do and, finally, he let us do it as he monitored each student. Then each target was critiqued individually. The results? Everybody learned and everybody showed significant improvement.

I went into the Leatham Shooting Institute as a genuine virgin. Sure I had shot .45 autos many times before, but I did not even put the holster on until I got to the

class. I made no attempt to try to learn how to draw on my own. As it turned out, I learned both a new shooting hold and a new draw.

Rob teaches a hold that consists of the shooting hand riding high with the thumb resting on the safety even as the gun is fired. This caused my first problem. The grip safety was not depressed by my hand using the high grip and I had to aid the Wilson Accu-Comp "LE" .45 with a penny's worth of friction tape around the grip to depress the safety. It will be necessary for me to have the grip safety permanently pinned. I really had to concentrate on keeping my thumb high on the safety or I found it riding down too low.

The left hand comes up, cups the right hand and the left thumb rides along the frame in front of the slide release. When I did it right, the shots were centered on the target, when I did it wrong they went left of center. The holes in the paper gave immediate feedback.

Not trying to practice drawing turned out to be one of my better decisions. Had I practiced, it would have been wrong. I started in Fast Draw back in 1958 using a pair of .45 Colt Single Actions. I've carried handguns for years in fairly high riding holsters and I've always used the scoop method. The hand goes for the gun in a circular fashion, rides up the holster, and "scoops" the gun from the leather.

For action shooting, Rob teaches a direct approach. Since the gun is riding high and the hands are held above the shoulders at the start, the hand moves directly to the gun and comes on the grip from the top. I have to fight a lot of negative transfer from 30 years of gun handling at this point.

We also learned to draw with the hands starting below the waist and again the method is the same, go right to the grip of the gun itself. Concentrate. Don't scoop. Get there quick. Do away with wasted motion.

As mentioned, we spent three days and expended 1200 rounds of ammunition and consumed mountainous amounts of Pepsi, Coke and GatorAde. How do you shoot up 1200 rounds? What is the program? Here then is the outline of our three day program:

DAY 1-AM: All shooting was done starting with the gun in hand, held below the waist, with the proper grip already established, targets at seven yards. The practice consisted of bringing the gun up for one shot only. Critique the target. Again. Again. Again . . . Followed by two shot groups. Critique. Again. Again. Again . . . Six shot groups. Critique. Again. Again. Again . . .

I found that I lost valuable time by trying to shoot very tight groups and concentrating on putting all the shots in the same hole. Negative transfer from other shooting disciplines.

DAY 1-PM: Now it was time to start from the leather. Go directly to gun grip. Thumb rides on safety. Pop the gun out of



Author Taffin (right) gets a few pointers from Rob during target scoring. The class shoots on both steel and paper (above) to learn different techniques that have made Rob the winningest IPSC shooter in history.





Young and old, fast and slow, experienced and beginner all learn from the hands-on teaching. It's unique in the shooting sports that you-- yes, you-- can take personalized lessons from a world champion. Can you imagine getting private tennis lessons from Boris Becker?

the holster. Draw. Lock. Fire. The same sequence was followed as in the morning, the only difference being from the leather.

DAY 2-AM: Now we are getting serious, the targets are at 25 yards. From the leather, starting with hands-down position, one shot, two shots, six shots. Each time the target is critiqued. "Excellent," "Phenomenal," "I didn't know gunwriters could shoot," "What in the world do you call that?" Do it again. Again. Again . . .

DAY 2-PM: Targets are moved up to seven yards. Two targets for each shooter. One shot, release the magazine, retrieve a new magazine from the pouch, reload, take second target. Again. Again. Again . . . Then the same sequence using two shots, then six shots. Do it again. Again. Again . . . Shoot slow. Move quick.

DAY 3-AM: Targets are set at 50 yards. Start from leather. Draw. Go into a prone position. Fire two shots. Again. Again. Again . . . The elbow starts to burn from hitting the ground. Now repeat the same sequence with six shots. Again. Again. Again . . .

Targets stay at 50 yards. Standing. Same sequence as above. Watch the sights. Shoot slow. Move quick. Draw is separate from the shooting. Again. Again. Again . . .

Targets set at 25 yards. Standing. Six shots. Draw and Shoot. Again. Again. Again . . .

DAY 3-PM: Targets set at 10 yards. Strong hand, weak hand. Draw. Fire two shots. Switch gun to weak hand. Fire two more shots. Again. Again. Again . . . Draw, fire six shots, release magazine. Retrieve new magazine from pouch. Reload. Switch to weak hand. Fire six more shots. Again. Again. Again . . .

Multiple targets. Draw and fire two shots on each of three targets. Again. Again. Again . . .

El Presidente. Start facing away from



targets. Rotate 180 degrees. Fire two shots on each of three targets. Reload. Put two more shots on each target. Again. Again. Again . . .

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the Competition Handgun Shooting Course at the Leatham Shooting Institute. It is 112°. GatorAde time!

We all learned a number of things along the way, tips that will help us in action shooting. And some of them are not recorded as they are strictly Rob's and I do not want to give away his whole course. Action shooting is a circular pattern, according to Rob Leatham. Practice yields skill which gives confidence which leads to competence which makes it fun, which implants a desire to improve, which takes us right back to practice and the cycle starts all over again.

In addition to the above schedule, we did manage to spend some time relaxing, recuperating in the cool of the range of-

fice, sharing loads and shooting ideas like any group of shooters that get together. In spite of the heat, it was a pleasant way to spend three days, in learning, shooting and fellowship with other shooters. Now if there was only some easy to pick up 48 rounds of brass from the Arizona desert!

The Leatham Shooting Institute offers three different skills courses. The three day Competition Handgun Course at \$285; a two day General Skills Handgun Course at \$210; and a two day Combat Shotgun Course at \$210. In addition, arrangements can be made for private instruction, and Rob will travel to a shooter's home range if there are enough interested shooters to participate. For a complete brochure, contact Rob Leatham at Leatham Shooting Institute, P.O. Box 1291, Mesa, AZ 85201.

I have the equipment, I have the instruction, I have the desire. See ya at the matches!



AUTO VS. REVOLVER

Continued from page 33

light pack on his back and my bullet penetrated the pack and went plumb through the man. My driver and I loaded him on the hood of the jeep and trundled him back to the nearest aid station we could find. He wasn't dead but he was sorta *hors de combat*.

(PS: I finally found that Merkel but not in that burg!)

If this might sound like I favor the old .38 Special over the much newer .357 Magnum, perish the thought. I like the .357 infinitely better and if given my druthers I'll take this fine caliber every time!

First .44 Magnum Kill

In 1956 I journeyed off to Vietnam as the chief instructor of firearms for the whole bloody South Vietnamese Army. I took with me—the country was at that time the best big game land in the world with the exception of darkest Africa—some 16 shooting irons and 2600 cartridges.

Among the firearms was the then-brand-new .44 S&W Magnum. Doug Wesson had presented me with this new caliber and his parting admonition was,

"Kill me a 10-foot tiger, wilya."

The .44 Magnum was brand new in those days and no one including this Old Indian knew just what it would do. I killed some game with the S&W but certainly no tigers. I shot five tigers during my 14-month sojourn but all with the rifle. Handguns are not for shooting big game, not even guns as big as the forty-four.

I did kill, however, probably the first

the chin. It literally lifted him off the ground and pitched him off the trail. A most heartening performance and one which pleased me immensely.

His weapon was the old French Lebel Model 1886 8mm caliber. I fetched it home as a sorta souvenir.

The Colonel's Pet .45

After these reams of praise for the cylinder gun it will be a somewhat shock-

For the past half-century I have never been without the old Colt Model 1911 .45 ACP and it remains my steadfast choice.

man ever shuffled off this mortal coil with the big pistol. This was a Viet Minh sniper who shot at me and my jeep as I trundled up the main stem from Saigon to Dalat. He missed me and I abandoned the vehicle and stalked the little bastard in his own hide-hole.

I had the good luck to ambush him on a faint trail traversing the mountain where he was bushed up awaiting my passing. I stepped out on this little Oriental at about eight feet and shot him in the throat with the big Doug Wesson gift.

The fat 240 grain slug knocking along at 1400 fps took this soldier just below

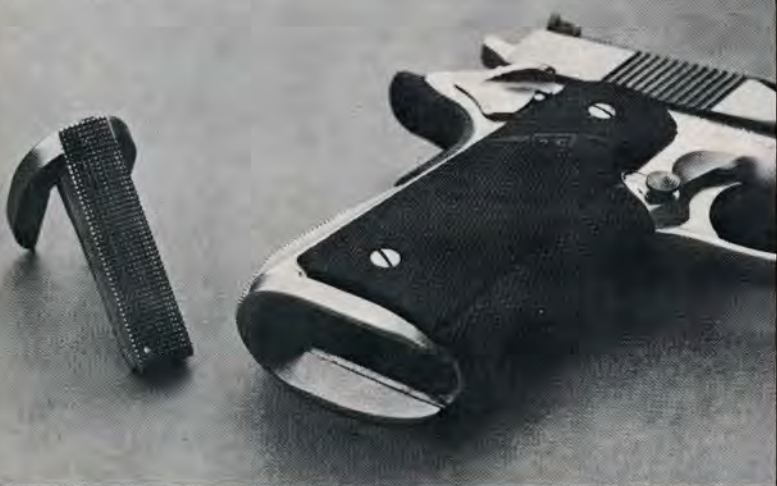
ing disclosure to confess that these days I never stick a nose outside my quarters, day or night, without a selfloading pistol in my pants.

For the past half-century I have never been without the old Colt Model 1911 .45 ACP and it remains my steadfast choice. I grant that the .45 Auto has been improved somewhat by the double action design, but in an analysis of any number of gun battles I've been in I am forced to the conclusion that the Model 1911 in its original and sturdy form has always served me exceedingly well. I'll just ride along with it thank you!



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THE MASTERS

Continued from page 65

that pass for shooting positions would make you think that these guys are double-jointed. There's the "dead frog" position and all manner of variations of the Creedmore, plus roll-over prone and other styles of lying down to shoot.

The idea, of course, is to simulate a sandbagged bench rest as closely as possible. Thick elbow pads help cushion the arms. Padded gloves help to stabilize the grip. Skis and bananas assist in holding the gun flat on the ground without holding the gun flat on the ground.

This rule about the gun not touching the ground is virtually impossible to enforce because the only way to see if the gun is resting on the ground is either by looking at the shooter from the front or the side. A range officer just can't see from behind. Well, an RO can't stand in front of the shooter. Bad for the health, don't you know. And he can't stand to the side because the firing line is composed of a row of toilet stalls. Each competitor is confined in a booth about the size of a public restroom's toilet stall. The walls are thick and filled with sand as a safety precaution in case of an AD sideways into the next stall.

This is all fine and well for safety and for keeping the shooter free from distractions, but it makes it impossible to enforce the rule about the gun resting on the ground.

Look at the Nyle Leatham's accompanying photos: fudging the rule just a bit, wouldn't you say?

And so it is that the 15 shots of the standing phase and the five shots at the 6" plates at 200 meters determine the scores in the Long Range Event. With bolt-action handrifles fired from the next best thing to a bench rest, the top guns simply don't miss those other 25 targets in the freestyle position.

Predictably, the scores of the leading shooters were all in the mid- to high-thirties with Vance Schmid knocking over 40 targets to win the Long Range Event.

No one was out-and-out winning the match after the Long Range Event. One or two contenders managed to shoot themselves in the foot, like Rob Leatham missing nine of the 15 standing targets, but for the most part the field clustered together after the first day.

The second day put the Gold Squad onto the dreaded concrete firing line of the Precision Event. The half-dozen or so contenders were all essentially tied coming into this stage. They wouldn't be for long.

The Masters is the Precision Event. As we've seen, the Long Range Event is basically a non-match because everyone shoots about the same score and what lit-

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tle difference there is amounts to nothing more than a few percentage points. Ditto the Action Event: one guy might shoot it in 25 seconds and another in 26. All the top guns shoot roughly the same score in the Action Event with very little room to either gain or lose.

Not so the Precision Event. A good showing here would be hitting half of the 45 targets. A score of 22 or 23 is outstanding in this event, but it's very easy to shoot a 10 or an 11 as well. Here you can easily blow yourself right out of contention even if you shoot very well on the other two events.

Take Brian Enos for example. Last year Brian *won* the Long Range Event and *won* the Action Event, but he did not win The Masters because he shot poorly on the Precision, only 16 out of 45 targets.

Or take Allen Fulford for example. When he won in 1987 he did very badly on the Action Event and only so-so on the Long Range, but he positively kicked butt on the Precision Event, and won the match. The Precision Event isn't just one of three stages of The Masters, it *is* The Masters.

True to form, the Precision Event separated the men from the boys. After today you might as well award the \$20,000 winner's check and pass out the trophies. Brian Enos shot a staggering 24 plates, an astonishingly good score that sealed his Masters championship. John Pride, who ended up taking Top Cop honors, looked like he could have pushed Brian, but he only hit 22 plates and already had a slight deficit in the Long Range Event. Ken Tapp, the 1987 Masters, fell victim to the Precision Event and even three-time national bullseye champion Allen Fulford managed only 23 targets. Everyone else was below the magic mark of 20 plates.

The Precision Event went to Capt. John McNally of the Army Marksman-ship Unit with 27 plates. Capt. McNally competed on two Olympic teams for the United States and has represented his country many times in other international competition.

Yet he missed quite a few plates—27 hits, 18 misses. An Olympic shooter, arguably the best bullseye shooter in the country, can only hit 60% of the targets. If this was a test in grade school, the best student in the class would get a D.

There is something seriously wrong when the best grade in the class is a D, actually a D-. A couple of guys get D's, the vast majority of the class flunks. If that happened in school, the teacher would say that the test was too hard, especially when a National Merit Scholar only gets a D-.

The Precision Event is a bad test. I watched one relay of five shooters go through the 45 shot course without a single hit. All five men missed every shot, 225 shots, 225 misses. Something is

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wrong here.

The Long Range Event was won with 88% of a perfect score. The Action Event was won with roughly 87% of a perfect score (based on veteran shooter Tom Campbell's estimation of how fast the event could conceivably be shot). And the Precision Event was won with 60% of a perfect score.

Because of its unfair difficulty, the Precision Event *is* The Masters. Brian Enos won the match on the second of three days, which makes it anti-climatic when the Action Event rolls around.

Sure enough, the third day saw Brian Enos surprise absolutely no one and win the match. People had been congratulating him for a day now, so it wasn't too much of a celebration.

While clinching The Masters was uneventful after the Precision Event, the Action Event did provide one dazzling highlight. For the first time in open competition, a revolver shooter won a speed event!

Wh-wha, a wheelgunner beating the likes of lightning-fast Rob Leatham and his .38 Super Wilson Accu-Comp? Or a Jerry Barnhart, the ace speedster with his .38 Super tricked-out comp gun? Surely not!

Yes, it's shades of Ed McGivern. A phenomenally skilled revolver-man by the name of Jerry Mikulek fired an out-of-the-box S&W Model 27, 8 3/8" barrel, faster than any of the renowned hose masters of the compensated automatic.

Jerry won the Action Event and its \$4,500 first place prize in a show of speed shooting that drew the largest single crowd of any event during the three days of The Masters. People will be talking about Jerry Mikulek's performance with his Model 27 for years to come.

Brian Enos finished in his usual bridesmaid's spot, second, on the Action Event but he had already clinched the title of the Master on the previous day's Precision Event.

Money, Money, Money

This was the fourth annual Masters International and in four short years the tournament has quickly become the premiere event on the pro circuit of handgunning competition. The total prize purse in the 1989 match topped a staggering \$200,000 in cash.

The Masters is unique in its rich cash purse. The other matches on the pro circuit offer generous prizes, but the rewards are largely comprised of merchandise donated by the sponsors. There is some cash involved, certainly, in these other matches but nothing like The Masters.

The Master himself, the "greatest all-around handgunner," receives a cool \$20,000 cash and a Rolex watch. Contrast that with the Steel Challenge's \$5,000 cash for first place. The Bianchi Cup pays \$10,000 to the NRA National Action Shooting champion.

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Additionally, The Masters offers substantial prize money for placing in the three events of the match. Winning the Action Event alone enriched Jerry Mikulek to the tune of \$4,500, almost what he would earn for winning the entire Steel Challenge!

But more important that the actual dollars involved is the manner in which The Masters parcels out the loot. There are two divisions of competitors, "Professional" and "Sportsman." Only the Second Chance bowling pin match has a similar division of pro and amateur shooters with their OSS (Ordinary Standard Shooter) and Master Blaster divisions.

At The Masters, Professionals pay exactly twice the entry fee of Sportsman and stand to win precisely twice the prize money. Of course the overall winner, The Master, can be either a Sportsman or a Professional and win the same \$20,000 cash.

Here's how prize purse breaks down for each event:

Event Cash Prizes

	Professional	Sportsman
1.	\$4,500	\$2,250
2.	\$2,700	\$1,350
3.	\$1,800	\$900
4.	\$900	\$450
5.	\$450	\$225
6.	\$360	\$180
7.	\$270	\$135
8.	\$270	\$135
9.	\$270	\$135
10.	\$270	\$135

And then in the aggregate of the three events, the shooter's final placing in the match, there is another round of cash awards:

Overall Cash Prizes

THE MASTER: \$20,000

	Professional	Sportsman
1.	\$8,000	\$4,000
2.	\$5,000	\$2,500
3.	\$3,200	\$1,600
4.	\$2,500	\$1,250
5.	\$1,500	\$750
6.	\$1,200	\$600
7.	\$1,000	\$500
8.	\$800	\$400
9.	\$600	\$300
10.	\$500	\$250

So where do all these greenbacks come from? The vast majority of the money comes from the support of the match sponsors, and some comes from the entry fees. (Actually, the entry fees are earmarked for match administration fees such as target construction, range maintenance, personnel, etc. while the sponsor money *must* be used exclusively for cash prizes.)

There are three primary categories of sponsorship and several levels of what I guess you would have to call "junior sponsorship." Maybe we could call them

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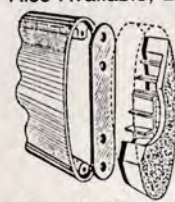
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It's interesting to note that several of the sponsors are business competitors, yet they set aside their rivalry in commerce to stand together and support the shooting sports. Tasco and Simmons are rivals in the scope market but they put aside their corporate differences at The Masters. *American Handgunner* and *Guns & Ammo* fight it out on the newsstand, but we join our foe in friendship at The Masters.

Most surprising of all is that arch-enemies Taurus and Smith & Wesson can put aside their deep rooted rivalry and join forces for The Masters. It was only a few months before The Masters that S&W was testifying before a Congressional committee that import tariffs should be assessed against Taurus for "unfair trade practices," but only a little while later the president of Taurus and the president of S&W are having a friendly chat at The Masters.

Remington and Winchester had no trouble getting along with each other, nor did Accurate Arms and the Scott Powder Company. This spirit of camaraderie and cooperation is to be admired—and appreciated.

The next time you go to your favorite gun shop to buy something, remember these sponsors who generously donate back to the shooting sports. There are some companies out there that don't give a hoot about you, the shooting sports or the Second Amendment—all they care about is the bottom line profit, and they'd be just as happy making cement blocks as guns. Don't do business with em! If you're going to buy something anyway, you might as well give your business to those companies that genuinely care about handguns and the handgunning sports.

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By Mark Hipes

Speer's division of CCI has recently introduced two new loadings to their Blazer line of ammunition in caliber .45 ACP. The bullets are patterned after the highly successful H&G #68 design and are of Speer's proprietary TMJ (Total Metal Jacket) construction. In this manufacturing process a swaged lead core has a jacket of copper alloy plated over its entire surface. After the plating process, the bullet is struck in a die to give it final dimensioning.

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For those of us whose experience indicates that projectile shape is more important, in traditional handgun calibers, than problematical expansion characteristics, these two offerings are significant. The cartridge specifications are as follows:

Bullet	185 gr. TMJ	200 gr. TMJ
Cartridge OAL	1.250"	1.250"
Powder	Bullseye	Bullseye
Primer	Blazer	Blazer
Casing	Aluminum	Aluminum
Velocity	800 fps (5" bbl.)	968 fps (5" bbl.)

These loadings were tested in four pistols for velocity and function. The pistols were unmodified, factory configuration pistols in excellent condition and consisted of a lightweight Colt Officer's Model, a Colt Combat Commander, a Colt MK IV Series 70 Gov't Model and a Smith & Wesson Model 645. Average velocity readings at 15 feet from the muzzle of the three Colt pistols were:

	185 gr. TMJ	200 gr. TMJ
Colt Officer's Model	753 fps	911 fps
Colt Combat Commander	781 fps	949 fps
Colt MK IV Gov't Model	800 fps	987 fps

Approximately 40 rounds of each type of ammunition were fired through each pistol. No malfunction occurred with either type of ammunition in the Colt

Combat Commander, Colt Gov't Model nor the S&W 645. No malfunctions occurred with the 185 gr. loading in the Colt Officer's Model. However, the 200 gr. loading resulted in nine stoppages in the Officer's Model. These stoppages were all related to recoil inertia class malfunctions, wherein the cartridge assumes a nose down attitude in the magazine/feed ramp area. This is a result of excessive slide recoil force.

Subsequent testing of the Officer's Model with a 24 lb. Wolff replacement recoil spring in place of the dual factory recoil spring eliminated this class of malfunction. This class of malfunction has been common in four other lightweight Officer's Models with a variety of IPSC major power factor loads when utilizing the dual factory spring system.

Accuracy testing was done in a match-grade Government Model Colt. All accuracy testing was done at 50 yards with the pistol secured in a Ransom Rest. (Accuracy from a semi-automatic Browning-type pistol is generally superior if hand held, assuming one can hold and sight the difference, as the slide to frame fit is critical in Ransom Rest testing.) Excellent performance was obtained with both types of ammunition.

It was interesting to note that the accuracy from the more formidable 200 gr. loading was equal to the accuracy of the 185 gr. loading. Test groups were fired in 10 round series.

The composite average of these 10 round groups with the 200 gr. loading equated to 2 3/4" vertical by 2 1/2" horizontal spread. For the 185 gr. loading the composite average was 2 3/4" vertical by 2 1/8" horizontal dispersion. While I am willing

to concede the possibility of some operator error in the use of the Ransom Rest, I do believe that the groups fired are representative of what can be expected from a combat tuned pistol.

Recoil of the 200 gr. loading is on a par with 230 gr. service ball ammunition. The 185 gr. loading recoil was indistinguishable from other commercial mid-range loadings. Similarly, various commercial mid-range 185 gr. loadings performed with accuracy comparable to both of these Blazer loadings.

The non-reloadable aluminum case Blazer ammunition has the advantage of lower cost for those who primarily shoot commercial ammunition. For those who shoot predominantly reloaded ammunition, the Blazer offerings provide high performance ammunition for those applications where recovery of spent casings is not feasible, such as hunting and matches where policing of brass is not allowed.

I utilized the high velocity loadings on two recent hunts for feral hogs, Russian boars and javelina. Seven, one-shot kills were made at distances ranging from 15 yards to 45 yards. This type of performance is impressive in comparison with the performance of various centerfire rifles also utilized during the harvest. These animals are physiologically very tough and displayed great tenacity. At ranges under 50 yards, the Blazer 200 gr. loading was comparable to the rifles performance at 200 to 500 yards.

Overall performance, considering reliability, accuracy, power and observed effect, the new semi-wadcutter TMJ Blazer .45 ACP products from Speer represent an excellent option for .45 ACP devotees.



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FBI TEST FOR '10MM LITE' ALREADY MIRED IN BOG OF CONTROVERSY

The Secret Service plans to adopt a semi-auto pistol in 1990, but the federal bodyguards are opting for a .38 Super instead of a 10mm like the FBI. The gun that will protect President Bush is said to be a SIG .38 Super.

This may be some sort of new record for auto pistol endurance. Paul Nowak, a Winchester sales rep, is an unabashed fan of the Glock pistol and he swears up and down that he has fired 37,000 rounds through his Glock 17 *without a single malfunction*. Needless to say, Paul is a big fan of the Austrian auto and is currently teaching his son to shoot the high-tech Nine.

Word has it that Taurus will chamber their Model PT-99 copy of the Beretta M-92 in .45 ACP, .357 Magnum (?) and 10mm Auto (!). Taurus recently introduced their 92 clone in .41 Action Express.

A judge has ruled in favor of the Union of Automobile Workers (UAW) in its lawsuit against Colt Firearms. The judge ordered Colt to pay \$40 million in damages to the UAW and reinstate the jobs of 850 UAW workers. Colt spokesmen had no comment on the judge's ruling and declined to speculate if Colt would appeal the decision.

The new 10mm pistol that Glock has entered in the FBI test for a new sidearm will be introduced to the public as the Glock 20. It holds 15 rounds of potent 10mm Auto. The slide weighs 6 ozs. more than the standard 9mm slide which should make the pistol easier to shoot.

The grape vine whispers that Ruger has chambered a prototype P-85 in 10mm Auto. Hopefully, we can all order one before the year 2000 if the incredibly slow delivery of the original P-85 was any indication of things to come.

The Southport gunmaker has something for rimfire fans in 1990, the first double-action Ruger .22 LR. It will be a six-shot plinker based on the SP-101 frame, which is currently only chambered in .38 Special.

More news concerning Ruger is that William B. Ruger, Sr. has recently purchased John Rigby & Company of London. In 1989, Ruger announced their new magnum action Model 77 rifle in .416 Rigby—now they own the company that made that cartridge famous!

Meanwhile, down the road in Massachusetts, Smith & Wesson continues to

implement what I affectionately call their "Gun Of The Week" policy. It seems like Smith is coming out with new models at the rate of one every seven days!

The latest Smiths include the Model 16, a K-frame with a full barrel lug, L-frame style, chambered in .32 H&R Magnum. The venerable Model 27 will be made in stainless steel and called the Model 627 with amenities including an L-frame barrel lug, unfluted cylinder and roundbutt grip frame.

Last but not least, Smith is introducing the Model 3913 and companion Model 3914 which are basically chopped-down Model 3904s.

The 3913 has a stainless slide and alloy frame while the 3914 has a blue slide atop the alloy frame. One of these guns will be marketed in the LadySmith program, no doubt with a "frosted" finish (read: bead blasted stainless), a stylish monogram (read: S&W logo) and ergonomically feminine grips (read: Hogue's).

The FBI test for a new 10mm auto pistol appears to be headed for a worse scandal than that of the Army test for a 9mm pistol. Two protests have already been filed over improper procedures by the FBI.

The first protest concerns the FBI's purchase of 3 million rounds of the specially down-loaded 10mm round that was bought from one manufacturer without first taking bids on the sizeable ammunition purchase from other manufacturers.

The second protest comes from Glock because quantities of this special ammunition was made available to Smith & Wesson, a contender in the 10mm test, but the ammo was not offered to Glock for developing their 10mm pistol. Glock claims they were unfairly treated because their competitor had access to the actual ammunition that would be used in the FBI's test.

Glock said their development was done with full-power 10mm Auto ammunition, and they hope the guns will function with the lighter FBI loads. Generally speaking, a semi-auto pistol requires a weaker recoil spring to function reliably with light loads, and Glock feels they should have been allowed to test different spring strengths in their gun like Smith was allowed to do.

Doubt has also been raised about the validity of the FBI's ballistic test that resulted in the Bureau's decision to adopt

their specially down-loaded 10mm cartridge which fires a 180 gr. bullet at about 950 fps. The results of this test, which involved firing into ballistic gelatin after the bullet had passed through several different mediums, like light clothing, dry wall and sheet metal, showed that the FBI's "10mm Lite" achieved a 97% success rate (defined as 12-inches of penetration into the gelatin).

A training officer with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center told *American Handgunner* that what the FBI didn't mention is that .45 ACP Remington 185 gr. hollowpoints achieved 95% success in the same test, a scant 2% behind the 10mm Lite which is statistically irrelevant.

Just when you think you've seen everything that can possibly be done to the great Government Model, along comes something new. Pachmayr turned



Norman's .50 BMG Gov't Model.

John Browning's auto pistol into a single-shot with their Dominator conversion kit for things like the .308 and .44 Magnum. That's nothing compared to what *Handgunner* reader Norman Chung has done to the ol' 1911.

Norman scoffs at previous attempts to turn handguns into really big bore boomers. A Remington XP-100 in .458 Win. Mag., that's nothing. A Contender in .45-70, that's a mouse gun. How about something *really* big?

Norman has a 1911 pistol converted to a single-shot chambered in .50 BMG! Like in .50 caliber Browning Machine Gun. You know, the big sucker that shoots 750 grain bullets! Norman is loading a horrendous charge of Hodgdon 5010 powder with "light" 600 grain Barnes bullets for his soft plinking loads and Winchester 231 under NEI 830 grain cast slugs for his heavy hittin' load.

The intrepid handgunner began by roping down the 15 pound behemoth to the shooting bench and firing it remotely. Nothing blew up, so he cut up a pair of heavy-duty work gloves and sewed extra leather padding into the palms.

Norman tells what it was like: "The full load was fired without aiming and I expected the muzzle to fly overhead. Not so, a firm push back by the pistol was given a controllable stop in a short distance."

Congratulations, Norman, you get my vote for "Most Likely To Blow Himself Up." Let me know when you get that 1911 chambered for a 105mm howitzer.





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