

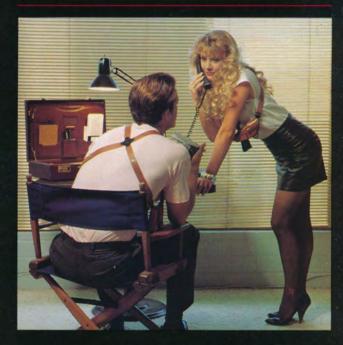


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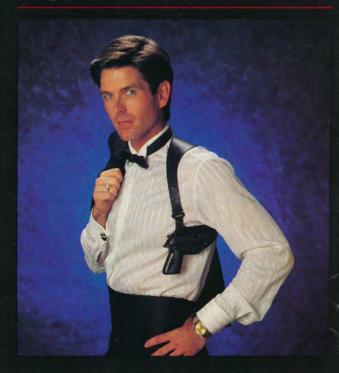


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AMERICAN HANDGUNER

MAY/JUNE 1991

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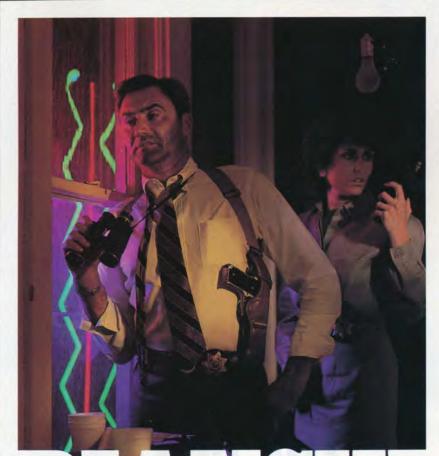
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WARNING: firearms are dangerous if used improperly, and may cause serious injury or death. Due to the inherent variables in the reloading of metallic cartridges, verify all published loads with manufacturer's data. Consult a professional gunsmith when modifying any firearm. Be a safe shooter!

But Can You Eat Them?

Since I read American Handgunner front to back (or is it back to front?) and find Speak Out very pleasing, I thought I would send something to you about "bottomfeeders of society."

It's a Bill To Regulate The Hunting And Harvesting Of Attorneys. By the way, I'm sure as hell not a lawyer.

Bill Roy Oakland, Calif.

Game Regulations: Hunting And Harvesting Of Lawyers

372.01 Any person with a valid state rodent hunting license may also hunt and harvest attorneys.

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372.03 The willful killing of attorneys with a motor vehicle is prohibited unless such vehicle is an ambulance being driven in reverse. If an attorney is accidental-

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Vive La French!

I have just read the article on the Smith & Wesson Performance Center (Jan/Feb '91) and would like to share with other readers my experience with John French, head of revolver work at the S&WPC.

Approximately two years ago, I had three S&W revolvers customized by a very well known revolversmith. After receiving these three guns, I was very disappointed with the quality of the work and a S&W 25-2 was sent back three times and still was not done to my satisfaction.

My phone calls to rectify the situation were to no avail. In an attempt to find a gunsmith that could straighten out someone else's work, I recalled reading an article by Mickey Fowler in the *American Handgunner* on John French and his "Buff Buster" .44 Magnum.

I then contacted John at his Third Stone Gunworks in California and he agreed to look at the revolvers. When I received them back I was amazed at the work John had done. The quality was nothing short of perfection. I was so impressed that I sent him back a new 625-2 and received back a work of art,

perfect in every detail.

After having several revolvers worked

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on by many "big name" revolversmiths, I can honestly say that John French's work is second to none. He strives to please his customer in every respect and spare nothing in reliability and beauty. Anyone who wishes to own a revolver which is as close to perfection as it can be should contact John at the Smith & Wesson Performance Center.

> Ben Heskett Lincoln, Neb.

Customized Taurus?

Your magazine is an important source of information to me and many others. I have learned much from your informative articles. I have but one bone to pick with

Your articles on custom guns and gunsmithing only feature the major manufacturers: S&W, Colt and Ruger. As an owner of other brand guns, it would be nice to see articles on pistolsmiths who work on custom features for Taurus, Rossi and CZ clones.

Not all of us can afford the Big Name Brand, but we still want the best from what we own. Please give us owners of the other brands as much as you do the Big Three.

> Craig R. Kelley Philadelphia, Pa.

Befuddled Gunwriters

I wonder sometimes if gunwriters stay awake at night with the express purpose of concocting outrageous theories to befuddle readers and stimulate magazine circulation. This seems to be the case with Massad Ayoob in his Cop Talk column of Jan/Feb 1991.

Ayoob cites five shooting incidents involving full-power 10mm Auto loads and then suggests that the 10mm has inadequate stopping power. In four of the five incidents the recipient of the 10mm lead was killed or immobilized. In one incident the victim was hit in the shoulder and was not seriously disabled.

While the performance of the 10mm ammunition may not have been ideal, one can hardly malign the round (either in its full-power load or FBI "Lite" form) as feeble.

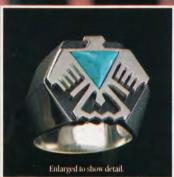
It would seem that Mr. Ayoob's definition of adequate stopping power would guarantee immediate one-shot stops. This is a laudable standard of performance. Unfortunately, handguns chambered in practical calibers are not capable of such performance.

When seeking a one-shot stop, it is best to grab a high-power rifle, preferably a magnum one. Even then, the shooter will select an appropriate cartridge, strive for perfect bullet placement and prepare for a follow-up shot.

Surely any person who makes a living writing about and teaching handguns is aware of their inherent limitations. So why should Mr. Ayoob expect rifle-like

Continued on page 12

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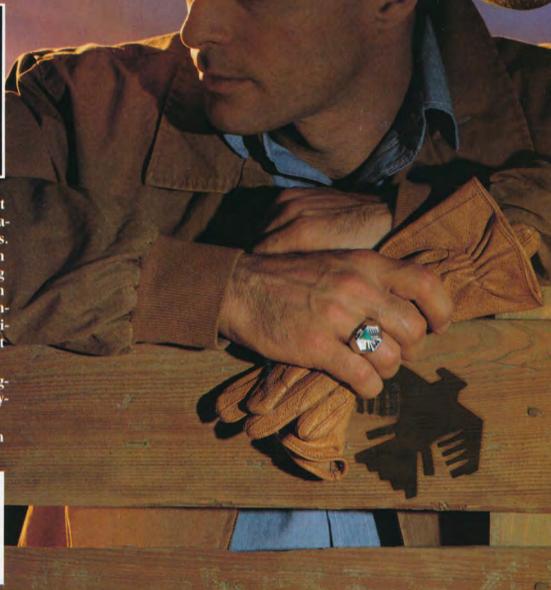


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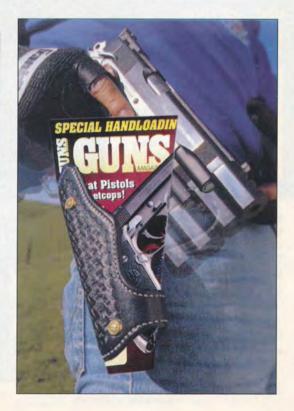
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performance from a handgun? Perhaps he is intentionally tormenting AH readers or, heaven forbid, he is associating with too many other gunwriters.

Steve Fillerup San Juan, Puerto Rico

Ayoob Saves Lives

Each so-called "perfect" defensive handgun cartridge was developed by a lot of trial and error. Unfortunately, some people have died during that trial and error stage.

Fortunately, Massad Ayoob and others are quick to mention problems with a cer-

tain "perfect" defensive handgun cartridge and, in so doing, help to save lives by bringing the problems to light.

Don't, however, sell the 10mm short. (No pun intended.) It may have been heralded as the defensive round for all-time, but if your readers are serious subscribers and handgunners, they already know that no defensive handgun cartridge is "perfect." The 10mm needs more development.

Officer Ted Kolodziej #523 Departmental Armorer Willowbrook PD Willowbrook, Ill.

.40 S&W Hoax

Okay, you guys. Every gunwriter in the

US has had a chance to collect at least one paycheck from the .40 S&W. Now it's time to fess up and admit it's all been a big hoax. No one could possibly believe all the hogwash that's been written about it.

I believe it was Jeff Cooper who said that you first select the best round for the job, then buy the best launching platform for that round. In the case of the .40 S&W, we're selecting the most comfy little launching platform, then shoehorning in the biggest round that will fit. We end up with a compromise.

Even the FBI seems to have concluded that you have to push the 180 grain bullet to nearly 1,000 fps for adequate performance. To get this from a .40 S&W, you're pushing the ragged edge. This was the same reason the Feds decided against the 9mm and .45 ACP— they're already at their performance limit.

Winchester certifies that their 180 grain .40 S&W load at about 950 fps is tested at 30,000 psi, comfortably below the 35,700 psi SAAMI maximum pressure ceiling for the .40 S&W. Editor.

All of the real-life statistics (Marshall, Ayoob) show that the all-time best stopper is the 125 grain .357 Magnum at about 1,450 fps. The only way to duplicate these ballistics in a rimless auto round is in some variation of the 10mm!

Yea, yea, I know. It's just too much recoil to handle. The same gunwriters who have no trouble shooting the hot .357, .41 and .44 Magnums suddenly turn into wimps when they pick up a 10mm? Our average cops are too wimpy or too lazy to learn to shoot any round that will get the job done without using 15 shots.

That's the same kind of thinking that got our M-14 battle rifles taken away in Vietnam and gave us the "plastic fantastic." We Americans just don't have the gumption that our ancestors had... bull!

Any cop that would go on the street without having a weapon that he knew, without a doubt, was capable of doing the job, if he did his job, has more guts than brains. The police administration that sent him there should be turned out unarmed in Harlem at midnight.

Don't get me wrong, I don't blame S&W. They're just selling the pablum that our milquetoast officials want to buy. But you guys know better.

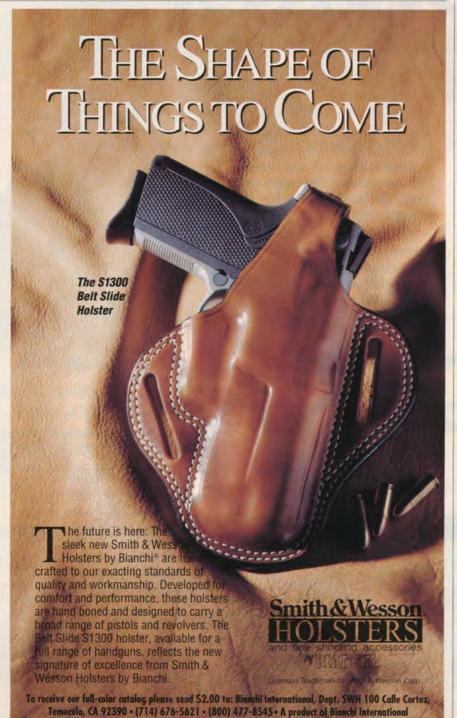
Don't stampede into sending our finest out with two strikes against them. They have enough problems with the courts on the side of the streetrats and scumbag lawyers trying to put them in jail every time they sneeze wrong.

Earl F. Hawkes Pt. Mugu, Calif.

(Scumbag lawyers? Isn't that redundant? Editor)

.40 S&W Hoax, Part II

The .40 S&W cartridge has generated an enormous amount of excitement. Unfortunately, when the gunwriterContinued on page 15



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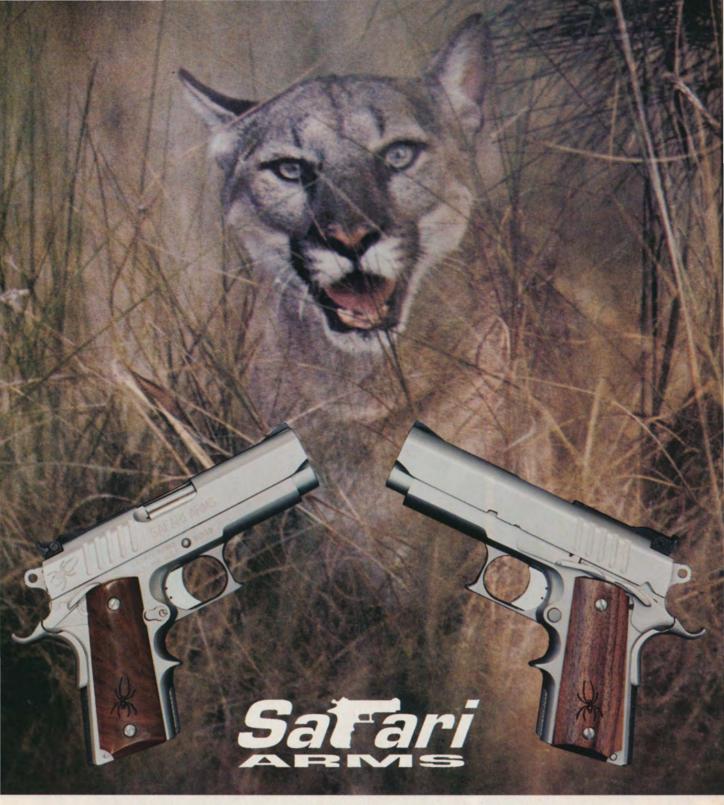
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John O. Stewart Denver, Colo.

induced hype is swept aside, very little substance remains. This round is unproven and possibly under-powered.

Anyone remembering the RII expectations and real-world performance of the 9mm in its FMJ configuration should be skeptical of the latest "wonder bullet." J.D. Jones, Evan Marshall and Massad Ayoob are to be commended for their refusal to jump onto this mindless bandwagon.

Also, the .40 S&W and the .41 Action Express are often compared as "ballistic equivalents." However, load data on these cartridges (including AH's *Taffin Tests*) indicates that the .41 AE, with more powder capacity, is capable of higher velocities with heavier bullets.

As for bullet launching platforms, the Jericho 941 is solidly built with quality that far surpasses anything sold by Smith & Wesson in recent memory. Those who insist on an unproven middle-of-the-road cartridge and weapon combination should be well served with the .40 S&W.

Ronald L. Barnes Aledo, Texas

J.D. Jones To Head FBI?

After a long hiatus, I picked up the Jan/Feb '91 issue of American Handgunner because of Mr. Ayoob's article on 10mm shootings. Although I am sure he is aware that a sample of five is meaningless, it was still a good, informative piece

That'd show them crooks that G-men ain't wimps!

typical of his best output.

Then there was Mr. J.D. Jones' column which detailed his rigorous and exhaustive test of the .40 S&W which, in the likely event that you publish his stuff without reading it, was to fire one round into the dirt.

If Mr. Jones is important to your magazine, I suggest you keep this sort of thing out of his column and ensure he sticks to hunting issues. If the FBI were to see it, I am certain they would fire all their firearms people and hire Mr. Jones away at three times his present salary.

Oh, where was he when the Bureau was testing the 10mm? Maybe he could convince them to adopt the T/C Contender in .588 JDJ— that'd show them crooks that G-men ain't wimps!

As for all the FBI's 10mm pistols, they could pass them out on the streets. You know, like the clean needles program designed to prevent the spread of AIDS. Since the 10mm is so puny, maybe the bad guys would stop hurting

Major 9 Passes Test

Before I come to this issue I would like to point out my interest and involvement in Major 9 and the qualifications of the developers.

I am sponsored by Pro-Gun Services based in Birmingham. The proprietor is Gary Clark, former Proof Master at the Birmingham Proof House.

I represented England at the last IPSC World Championships held in Adelaide and I am Master Grade shooter.

Gary Clark made my first Major 9 pistol back in November '87 and I started to use Major 9 in competition in February '88. The first loads used Blue Dot and were well inside CIP service pressure.

All the loads we have used for competition have been within the service pressure limits laid down by our proof houses and CIP. Back in September '88 pressure tests were witnessed by the editor of *Target Gun* (UK magazine) who was only then prepared to go to press on the development.

After all this work to do it right, we were dismayed when we heard in July '90, that USPSA intended to effectively ban Major 9 in competition. We informed IPSC and the USPSA of all our results including official proof house reports.

We were privileged to see a draft copy of the intended Resolution and were pleased to see that if we provided *clear* and convincing, verifiable evidence the USPSA Board of Directors would probably have to drop the issue.

Well, we certainly provided the evidence but the people concerned went ahead and imposed the resolution on the members of USPSA.

They hid behind SAAMI despite the fact that manufacturers, including Colt, accept CIP pressures as being safe in their guns. The loads referred to in considering the ban were over SAAMI pressures and most probably way above CIP service pressure.

The course of action should have been to pull ammo from competitions on the Unsafe Ammo Rule (most of us could overload almost any caliber).

I had an opportunity to talk with Dave Stanford (USPSA president) at the recent World Championships. Dave took 50 rounds of my competition ammo to have tested under SAAMI specifications.

These loads used a quantity of 3N37 (a Finish Powder). This load makes a factor of around 180 through one of Gary's comp guns. The interesting point, as confirmed by a communication from Dave Stanford, is that they do make factor within the safe limits laid down by SAAMI.

Another point is that out of all the loads we have ever used to make factor, the 3N37 loads give us the highest pressures. The reason we changed from Blue Dot was because it was batch sensitive requiring frequent chronographing. The magic powder scenario doesn't exist.

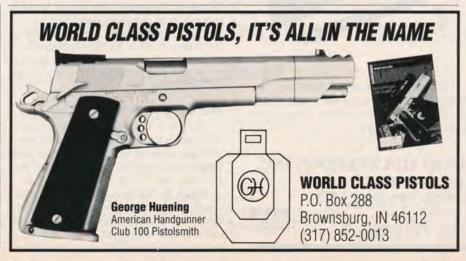
I hope enough pressure can be brought to bear on those who have the authority to lift the current ban on Major 9 by your readers.

The other issue to arise out of this "concern for safety" is the minimum caliber rule for major to be adopted in January, 1993. We now know that there is not a problem in loading 9x19 to make factor, so why not drop this proposal to adopt the .40 calibre rule?

Our first competition at Palmers Cross in January saw the destruction of a .40 caliber Glock. I hear that it was very spectacular and luckily no one was hurt. Six quality over-loads were used in this destruction. I wonder if .40 S&W will be banned!

Mark Derbyshire UKPSA 1706 England

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INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

DAVE ANDERSON

ACCURACY IN A COMBAT PISTOL CAN BE GOOD WITH THE RIGHT FORMULA

wenty years ago there were autopistols that would shoot into 2" at 50 yards, autos that were reliable, and autos that would handle full power loads, but not many that would do all three.

Recently I was using a Ransom Rest to test some match loads in my Super (a Wilson Accu-Comp LE on a Series 70 Colt). Five 5-shot groups were fired at 50 meters, about 55 yards. The best was 1.5", the worst 2.4", average of all five was a bit under 2".

This gun has fired between 50 and

135 gr. and 150 gr. weights.

Most serious competitors are switching to jacketed bullets for match use. The feeling is they feed a bit more reliably than lead, they tend to be more accurate (especially at .38 Super velocities), and there is no smoke from burning bullet lube as there is with cast lead bullets.

The Elites are very reasonably priced—considering their quality—but still about twice as much as cast bullets, so I expect most shooters will continue to use lead for practice and save the jacketed bullets for match use.



The Ransom Rest works equally well with Dave's Bianchi Cup revolver.

60,000 rounds, with maybe five or six malfunctions, while the loads have a power factor of 185 to 190.

Over the past couple of decades pistolsmiths have learned a lot about fitting up autopistols to provide both accuracy and reliability. With barrels that allow the cartridge to headspace on the case mouth instead of the narrow rim, the .38 Super is as accurate as any other cartridge.

This Wilson gun has a bit more play in the frame-to-slide fit than when it was new, yet it still delivers splendid accuracy. A gun that's built right to start with will last a long time.

Accurate Ammo

The other component of accuracy is the ammunition. The loads being used were put up in Remington +P cases, with Winchester primers, Accurate Arms No. 7 powder, and 150 gr. C.P. Elite bullets.

The C.P. Elites have earned an outstanding reputation for accuracy among IPSC and action shooters. They are a full metal jacket roundnose design, currently available only in .356" diameter and in

For information on C.P. Elites and the full line of cast bullets (in diameters from .356" to .452") call C.P. Bullets at 1-800-878-BULLET or 1-215-956-9595 or write to 1814 Mearns Road, Dept. AH, Warminster, PA 18974.

The Rest Test

For serious accuracy testing of handguns and ammunition, the Ransom Rest is almost indispensable. Its role is similar to that of a progressive reloader. Just as a progressive machine allows you to load more ammunition in less time and with less effort, the Ransom lets you shoot more groups with less time and effort.

It takes a little time to get a progressive loader set up and running, but once everything is adjusted the progressive makes up that time in short order. Similarly it takes a few minutes to get the Ransom Rest bolted down, the gun locked in the inserts and aligned on target, but once that is done you can shoot groups as fast as you can press the trigger bar and return the rocker assembly to battery.

I know some very good shooters who

claim they can fire as good a group over sandbags as in a Ransom Rest. I'm sure they can, as can any experienced handgunner who is willing to take some time and pains.

But they can't do it as quickly, or as

easily, or as consistently.

Firing a long string of groups is tiring, especially on the eyes. In a section of his book on group shooting Brian Enos says, "You'll notice that your vision is clearest on the first shot...after about the third shot, your vision starts to deteriorate. I usually won't shoot more than six shots before I let my eye rest."

I really found this out recently while testing a pistol for a *Handgunner* article. There were 17 types of factory ammo and four handloads to test. My basis for comparison of accuracy is five 5-shot groups with autos, five times around the cylinder with revolvers.

In this case that meant 105 groups, a total of 525 shots, and since the pistol was a new model for which Ransom inserts were not yet available the shooting was done over sandbags. I didn't keep track of the number of hours it took, but it was a long time, spread over more than one day, since it was just too tiring to do all the shooting in one stretch.

In retrospect I can see I should have bought a blank insert from Ransom and fitted it to the pistol. Even if it took a couple of hours to fit, the shooting would have taken only a fraction of the time.

The Ransom Rest is a single-purpose robot. Maybe you've seen the movie Short Circuit in which a malfunctioning robot escapes from a military base and eventually acquires human characteristics. (Okay, it's not Citizen Kane, but a couple of kids I know, my 11-year old and Rob Leatham, thought it was pretty good.)

When the scientists track the robot down, the girl who is sheltering it tells them it won't surrender because it's scared. The scientist looks at her in exasperation, "It's a machine. It doesn't get scared. It doesn't get happy. It doesn't get sad. It just...runs...programs!"

That's what makes the Ransom Rest so useful. It's a machine. It doesn't get tired. It doesn't care if the sun is behind the targets or in front of them. It doesn't get bored, or cold, or thirsty, or frustrated and angry. It just keeps performing the two fundamentals of accuracy, over and over; it holds the gun steady, and it holds it the same way every time.

The Ransom currently lists at \$229, with the windage base an additional \$125. One can get along without the windage base by moving the plywood base itself to align the gun on target before clamping it to the shooting bench. The windage base, though, certainly is convenient.

The price of the Ransom Rest is quite moderate considering the high quality and the excellent results provided. For the Continued on page 107



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MASSAD AYOOB

POLICE TRAINING SEMINAR OFFERS MULTITUDE OF TOPICS AND EXPERTS

he American Society of Law Enforcement Trainers (ASLET) drew well over 400 criminal justice instructors at its 1991 International Seminar in West Palm Beach, Fla. Palm Beach County Sheriff's coordinators Bob Wilson, Bill Testa, and Rick Myers helped make it the smoothest running ASLET seminar yet, as well as the largest.

Firearms is only one of seven training "tracks" at ASLET, and the gun programs are supported by outstanding training in the administrative, defensive tactics, and adult education tracks among others. With every topic repeated once, a trainer can attend all the firearms work in two days and have two days free for a smorgasbord of additional top-quality training ranging from management to civil liability and policy-making.

Each track has seven presenters. Naturally, some of the information is propri-

etary to law enforcement and ASLET prefers it not be discussed in a newsstand magazine. Still, there were many points that aren't secret, and would benefit a law-abiding citizen as much as a working police officer.

Heckler & Koch provided some 30 MP5 submachine guns and assigned Phil Singleton and John Meyer from their academy to provide a four-hour block of hands-on training.

Singleton, a former SAS troopie with combat experience, emphasized the use of semiautomatic fire, especially the double-tap. With the light recoil and superb controllability of the MP5, the fastest possible two-shot pair can be easily delivered.

From London's elite armed police unit, PT-17, to the SAS itself as well as several other units, the double-tap has proven highly effective in combat and drastically reduces the danger of hostages or bystanders being struck with the edge of a full-auto burst. The same techniques work perfectly with the semi-auto MP5 SF that FBI has popularized as a police cruiser gun, or the HK 94 popular among civilians.

Full-auto was not neglected, however. By the end of the short seminar, the students were emptying an entire 30-shot sustained full-auto burst into the center of a Federal-type "O" target.

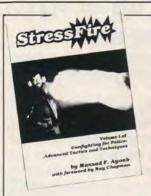
Beretta sent their senior police instructor, ex-K9 cop Brian Felter, along with about 30 of their 1200 FP police shotguns. Available to the public as well, this Benelli-based lightweight handles like a dream, and in Brian's class on the use of the semi-auto police shotgun, it became clear why such advanced firearms training units as FBI are considering the switch from pump to auto for field troops.

No short-shucking, extremely rapid return to target and multiple target engagement, and ease of manipulation by those with short arms are just some of the 12 gauge auto's advantages for police patrol, as Brian clearly demonstrated.

His book on police carbines and shotguns will be out soon, complementing his excellent text on law enforcement handgun use and techniques.

Smith & Wesson Academy flew in Gerry Smith, long one of their senior trainers and an ex-St. Louis street cop. He

Continued on page 86



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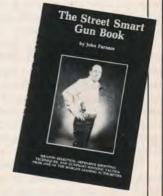
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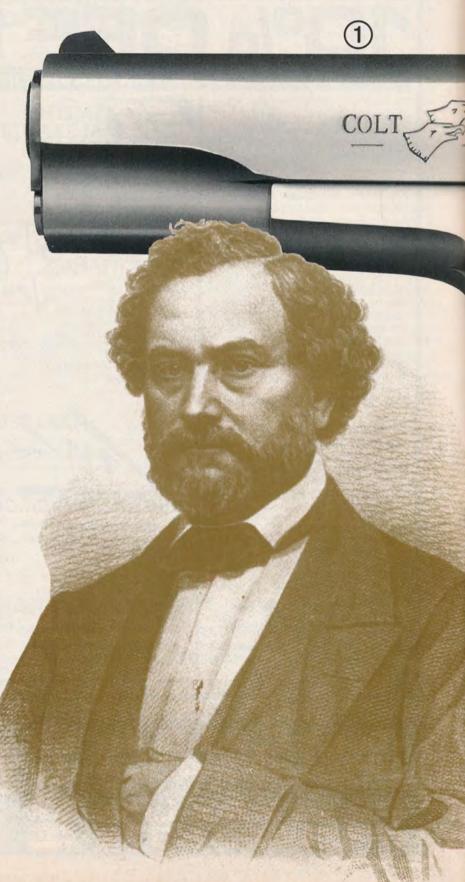
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his new Colt Double Eagle.



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JOHN LAWSON

SECRET OF SMOOTHING THE TRIGGER LIES IN FITTING THE SEAR PROPERLY

f a handgun is going to shoot accurately, its trigger pull must build up smoothly and uniformly to a reasonable tension, then release suddenly and smoothly without any perceptible backlash, or overtravel.

Then, given that all other mechanical factors are correct and tolerances tight but not binding, the projectile will hit precisely where the sights were aligned when the trigger breaks free from the sear's grip on the hammer or striker.

A condition known as *takeup*, or slack, is a free travel of the trigger with lessened tension before the actual trigger pull proper begins. This is sometimes refered to as a "military double pull." Designed to warn the shooter that the critical portion of the trigger release pressure is about to begin, it has some value in keeping combat troops, frightened half to death by artillery bursts and other unpleasant manifestations, from throwing away a shot without proper sight alignment.

Usually, a shooter will object to this double pull unless the first takeup is almost effortless, but it is necessary to a small degree in most trigger pulls to insure the uniform re-engagement of the trigger mechanism in a repeater.

Another condition, known as creep is

often confused with takeup. The definition of creep is any perceived movement of the sear in the hammer notch or striker notch.

If you can apply the thumb safety on your handgun and pull rather hard, then hold the piece by your ear and hear a slight click as the sear resets deeper into the hammer notch, you have a faulty thumb safety.

If you drop the safety to the fire position after the pull, without touching the hammer, and the hammer drops to half cock, you should replace the safety. If, when doing this test, the hammer remains cocked, but again you hear the slight click when you touch the hammer, allowing the sear to seat deeper, you have a bad creep condition and usually the only satisfactory method of correcting the condition is to have parts replaced and a proper trigger job done on the weapon.

If you perform any of these tests, make absolutely certain that the weapon is unloaded, both the magazine and chamber. Check for a dry chamber every time you cock the hammer, and make this a regular ritual in any dry fire practice or test procedure.

Testing a double action pistol, such as the S&W's for creep will usually require instrumentation in the form of a sensitive dial indicator and magnetic base, but with sufficient practice, any pistolsmith can learn to feel the hammer cam backward a few thousandths of an inch, indicating camming, a condition of DA pulls as annoying as creep in single action.

Remember your first time dry firing a weapon, when your coach asked you if the sight picture was correct and you answered, "It's about right," and your coach exploded "It's either all right or all wrong! There's no about right."?

Trigger pull and subsequent release has to comply with this same principle.

Mechanical faults in a trigger pull often result in dramatic problems. One that is most often overlooked is trigger length. If a trigger is too long or too short, it will sometimes result in a consistent grouping of shotholes in the 8 to 10 o'clock position, when other shooters group in the X-ring. Sideways pressure of too little or too much trigger finger on the operating surface is responsible.

A trigger pull that terminates with a camming effect of the hammer will often result in a group at 7 o'clock. Other reasons for shot groups or flyers in "jerker's corner" are unfamiliariarity with the weapon, too heavy a pull, getting rough with the trigger or similar impatience in getting the shot over with.

Obviously, these apply to a right handed shooter, and impact will be just opposite for a southpaw shooter.

Setting The Sear

Sear to hammer or striker contact must be precise and even all across the mating surfaces. This is easily checked with a magnifying glass of 10 power or better still, an opaque microscope, using a very precise fixture to hold the parts.

Loose, worn or undersized hammer and sear pins can make a maddening situation of inconsistent trigger pull. The holes should be reamed and special oversize pins used.

Another prolific source of inconsistent pull is a sear/hammer fit that contacts only on one side of the mating surface. This may be the result of freehand stoning, pinholes reamed through at an angle or various other faults. It always requires replacement of the affected parts and a proper trigger job.

A pistolsmith should be able to do a proper trigger job on any weapon worked on. In order to check the progress of the work, it will be necessary to do some dry firing and live fire. It is necessary to fire a large number of shots with every possible type of handgun on a regular basis. This is part of the fun of working on pistols and revolvers.

Don't get too set in your ways by favoring a certain type of handgun. Remain flexible and test everything that comes through your shop or department. Don't confine your tests only to dry fire, but really shoot them all.

You'll be surprised at how rapidly you will learn to detect trigger pull and hammer release faults.





CYLINDER & SLIDE, INC.

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Dear Shooter,

I'd like to spend a few minutes with you to better acquaint you with the products and philosophy of Cylinder & Slide, Inc.

First of all, thank you for 14 years of continual support. Without that, I wouldn't be writing this letter. The business has changed dramatically during those years. It all started in the basement of a local sporting goods store, hoping to attract enough work from the new and growing sport of IPSC handgun competition to make a living doing something I enjoyed. From that basement beginning of doing basic modifications on stock handguns, the business has grown and progressed to include today's fully customized, compensated "super guns". Your ongoing support and confidence in Cylinder & Slide, Inc. has made this possible. As we often hear on television, "Thank you for your support!".

Just what exactly do we do here? We still do what we did in the beginning - basic modifications to stock handguns. We also build the "super guns" as recently featured in the March/April 1991 issue of American Handgunner. Doing "just" an action job on a revolver or "just" a trigger job on an auto is as important to our shop as an order for a full house race gun. We value each and every customer and no job is too small to receive our individual attention. Our goal is to have you as a satisfied customer. If you should have a problem with any of our work or products, I expect you to call and talk with me so we can resolve the problem. Remember - guns are mechanical - we are human - and Murphy is alive and well!

In addition to basic modifications and custom work we also offer a complete selection of handgun parts and proven competition accessories through our catalog. These items are those that we use in the shop, so we know they can be relied upon to function as advertised. Most nationally known accessory manufacturers are represented in our catalog. To receive a copy of our catalog, please send \$3 (domestic) \$6 (foreign) to the above address. This amount is refundable with your first order.

We are an authorized Colt Parts Distributor and Warranty Station and a Magnum Qualified Smith & Wesson Warranty Station and parts supplier. In addition, we carry an extensive parts inventory for the Browning Hi-Power.

If you have questions or problems and would like to talk to someone, here is what you need to do. Phone calls for technical information are accepted between the hours of 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. Central Time. Remember - there is no such thing as a dumb question. If you have a question, we will do our best to give you an answer. However, it is simply not possible to spend all day on the phone answering questions, and get work done at the same time. Thus, we completely dedicate our afternoons to custom work! (It could be your handgun!) Of course, parts orders are accepted at any time. Needless to say, some mornings the phone is very busy and you will experience difficulty getting through. The best advice I can give you is to keep trying. For those of you who wish to write, we do our best to reply to our correspondence. However, if we answer the phone all morning and work all afternoon, guess when we have time to answer your inquiries -- at night, and we don't like to work every night. Please be patient and we do mean really patient. We will reply as soon as we are able. In case you haven't already guessed, we do have a backlog on custom work. This backlog does not apply to warranty work.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter. I hope it has given you some understanding of what we are and how we operate. We look forward to being of service to you in the future. Remember - all questions are important and no job is too small!

Respectfully yours,

Bill Laughily

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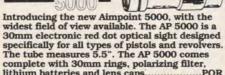
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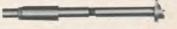
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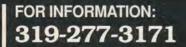


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HANDGUN HANDLOADERS CAN LEARN A LESSON FROM RIFLE BENCHRESTERS

eople who want to improve in their occupation or avocation usually look beyond the horizon just to make sure they're staying current with the proper techniques and procedures. That is exactly what we are going to do here.

Normally, most shooters reloading for pistols and handguns give little thought to that group of powder burning competitors absolutely obsessed with precision and the ultimate in accuracy, but benchrest shooting and reloading is a virtual treasure trove of useful hints and advice for improved accuracy from your reloaded ammunition, whether you're reloading for a handgun to be used in competition,

loading ammunition for these rounds in either .22 or 6mm, but as yet no manufacturer has produced a silhouette pistol in either of these chamberings.

The Three B's

Pindell emphasized the importance of the "Three B's" in benchrest shooting— Bedding, Barrels, and Bullets. Both Pindell and Knox agree on this and both emphasized the importance of a properly bedded action in a rifle, but since conventional handguns don't use bedded actions an interpretation of this prerequisite could mean both a proper "hand to pistol weld" and how well the action is fitted in terms of optimum efficiency and accuracy.



Benchrest shooters can teach handgun handloaders about accuracy.

the hunting fields, or your favorite tin-can sand pit.

Recently, I visited with two well-known figures from benchrest shooting, Ferris Pindell and Neal Knox. The main thrust of my questions was, "What little tidbits of information did they have to give the average reloading pistol shooter?"

For the sake of the newcomers among you, I should take this moment to give you some background on Ferris Pindell. He is the co-designer of the famous PPC cartridges that revolutionized benchrest shooting and later varmint rifle shooting in general.

The PPC case, which was built from the .220 Russian, has by all accounts reached the zenith of attainable accuracy from metallic cartridge firearms.

Ferris Pindell worked in cooperation with Dr. Lou Palmisano to develop this case and it has been used to capture just about every record in benchrest shooting for all distances up to and including 300 yards.

Sako is presently building rifles and

Ferris also emphasized his belief that the best barrels are made from 416 stainless steel, and Irv Stone, producer of those best quality Bar-Sto pistol barrels, agreed with this by defining the advantages of 416 stainless.

He related how 416 is a good barrel material because it makes a better finish and they are able to heat treat their barrels up to 42 or 43 Rockwell on the C scale with 416 which is harder than most rifle barrels, but a standard treatment on Bar-Sto pistol barrels.

Bullets occupy the last slot on Pindell's list and here again he emphasized the importance of uniformity and precision. In benchrest shooting the quality of the bullet jacket is paramount. The wall thickness of the jacket material must be uniform and the usual rule of thumb is it must be no more than .0003" in variation for total indicator reading.

This wall thickness uniformity is extremely influential on the center of gravity of the bullet and its resulting accuracy, but the word used throughout benchrest shooting is "concentricity."

They want the bullet concentric with the cartridge case, with the barrel throat, and even with the centerline axis of the barrel. They are that particular!

Concentricity Is The Key

But what does that have to do with all purpose, general use, reloaded ammunition, you may be asking?

Just this— because it applies to all reloaders, and how you adjust your individual reloading dies when installing them in the tool head of your progressive press or the top of your single station press.

The manner of installation has a major influence on concentricity.

Neal Knox pointed out the importance of having the shell holder loose in the ram when adjusting your dies. If you tighten it before complete adjustment of the dies are made there is a "set bias" because the empty case is forced to a predetermined attitude before it even enters the die for resizing or any other function.

It may be forced too much to the right or left of center and therefore concentricity will suffer and the resulting reloaded round will not be as accurate as those rounds where attention has been paid to concentricity.

Neal pointed out he mentioned many of these tips in a piece that was published in the Number Nine Speer Reloading Manual several years ago, but what every reloader should do to insure the best concentricity available with his brass and dies is to adjust the dies with an empty case in position.

The whole idea is get everything centered. That is the definition of concentric and the proper adjustment of your dies goes a long way toward that goal.

How To Install Dies

When installing your dies, adjust them to the correct length or depth, but *don't* lock them down with the lock rings, at least not yet.

Through use of a empty case and a loose shell holder insert the empty case and run it through the die. Because through the combination of the dies and shell holder both being loose and free to move to a small degree, you will be allowing them to center themselves in relation to each other, and only after adjusting to the proper length and depth settings through this manner will it become necessary to lock the dies in position with the lock rings and tighten the set screw on the shell holder in the ram.

This procedure reduces the thinning of one side of the case wall by reducing a disproportionate amount of side thrust from having the dies canted in a specific direction.

This bias or cant of the dies is admittedly small when viewed with the naked eye, but the influence on accuracy and

Continued on page 71

The Difference Between "Broken-In" and Broken.



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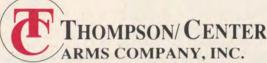
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JOHN TAFFIN

NEW SILHOUETTE BODY PROPOSES FRESH FORMATS ON GLOBAL SCALE

nternational Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association (IHMSA) is the top handgun silhouette shooting organization if one goes by the number of members, the number of matches held each year, and the number of participants.

National Rifle Association (NRA) silhouetting is number two and holds numerous matches and is especially popular in California mainly due to a rift always participate in the IHMSA Internationals. The number, however, is quite small compared to the number of United States participants.

Lately, the readers of *IHMSA News* have been treated to an exchange of correspondence between IHMSA president Frank Scotto and Norway's IHMSA leader, L.E. Vallery. I don't know which party is right or if they both are or if they

The biggest question that remains is whether or not American shooters are willing to really recognize that there are other silhouetters around the world and release the total control that we have had on silhouette shooting.

between the late Elgin Gates, who was president of IHMSA at the time, and a number of the California shooters.

As its name suggests, IHMSA was formed not only to promote long range handgunning, but also to do it internationally. There are many countries shooting silhouettes besides the United States and some truly international competitors both are wrong, but obviously there has been a major split that occurred between Mssrs. Vallery and Scotto after Frank was named president of IHMSA.

The outcome of all of this is a proposal by Vallery for a new silhouetting organization, a true international organization that combines and modifies rules from both IHMSA and NRA. Vallery spent a

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year working to put the new proposal together and gathered ideas from silhouette shooters all over the world.

Vallery is a long time silhoutte shooter and proposes the new organization to bring together all silhouette shooters around the world and unite them in working towards a common cause. I quote from Vallery's letter to me and information that he sent:

"From reading the many articles printed by the NRA as well as numerous articles printed in other national publications around the world it has become quite clear that we as sportsmen around the world have a common enemy— global anti-gunners!

"Some of these anti-gun organizations are run by the governments, and others by private organizations. It has become apparent to me that the privately run antigun campaigns are by far the most dangerous. The reason for this apparently is that internationally the news media is always anti-government no matter which party is governing and good government, good laws and law abiding citizens do not make headlines or sell newspapers.

"But historically speaking, small selfserving groups or individuals will make the headlines with their words or actions. Is it not strange that millions of shots per year are fired by the good guys but the media only report on the few shots fired by the bad guys?

"The scenario is that in countries where private ownership of guns is not allowed by the government, the entire citizenry of that country are united by a common cause. They would all like to own one. But it appears that in every country in the free world where citizens are allowed private ownership of guns by the local government, there is always a highly vocal minority anti-gun group who inevitably benefit from the free publicity and propoganda.

"It is my feeling that not only for the good of the sport but ultimately the good of sportsmen around the world we, each nation competing in any form of silhouette, should unite and form a strong and tightly bound international shooting association. In doing so we will be able to give and receive the support of our fellow national organizations when required."

The new organization proposed by Vallery is the ISSU or International Silhouette Shooting Union. Notice that the word handgun does not appear in the title. The reason being that this organization is proposed as an international umbrella that would take in all silhouette shooters both handgun and rifle.

ISSU Structure

Here we will only be concerned with the handgun proposals or those that are the same for both. Here then are the major components of the ISSU proposal:

MEMBERSHIP: Membership would Continued on page 93 3 GET 1 FREE! BUY 3 GET 1 FREE! BUY 3

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HOW TO SHOOT FAST And Accurately

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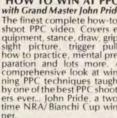
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MY GUNS By Ed Brown

A step-by-step guide to how I build my custom Government Model pistols.

Photos by Ichiro Nagata



he opportunity to explain to *Handgunner* readers what one does for a living may come only once in a lifetime, so when the editor asked if I could go through the process of building a custom gun, I jumped at the chance.

The tremendous growth of practical shooting has dramatically increased the demand for customized equipment. This article is for those who want to know exactly what goes into building a custom pistol. For those who already know a bit about this, I hope you can gain a greater appreciation for the work that goes into it.

Without any further delay, let's get into it. First, a gun to start on. What will it be: Colt, Springfield, Caspian, or something else? I slightly favor the Colt, but it's purely a personal preference. Historic significance perhaps. There are more copies of the 1911 design than any other, and many of them are plenty good enough to use as a base gun for a custom project.

If you are going to use a copy of the original, I suggest the Springfield Armory. I think they have by far the best clone going. Another thing I like about the Springfield company is the support they give to the shooting sports. They also listen to the pistolsmith's and shooter's suggestions.

Whatever gun you choose, let it be blue if you want a competition gun. Stainless has less abrasive resistance, and is therefore less suitable for a competition gun.

Let's assume you have a new Colt Government Model in blue finish and it is to be converted to a Maxi-Comp. This is the finest gun I build for competition and now I'll attempt to explain the steps necessary to complete it.

Initial Inspection

The first step is a complete disassembly. Many stock parts are replaced in the

completed gun, so during disassembly a sorting process is done. I simply throw the unused parts in separate box to get them out of my way. With so many pistolsmiths working on the 1911 design, the surplus parts inventory in this country is tremendous. This means that they are worth almost nothing.



Handcut checkering is one of the most intricate and painstaking skills of a pistolsmith. Ed lays his lines down with a mill (right) and then cleans up (above) with a needle file.

in an average gun could fail in one month of a competition shooter's life. (We are seeing many shooters going through 40,000 to 60,000 rounds per year!)

What are we looking for in

Imperfect parts, of course. A

competition gun needs excel-

lent quality, not okay quality. A

part that would last a lifetime

initial inspection?

We look at the slide. Are the frame rails large enough to dress down exactly parallel, or has a slip during production cut them out of square? Are the barrel locking grooves cut exactly in the center of the slide with the edges good and sharp? Or did they get cut .020" off center with a huge chamfering cut at the rear edge.

Next, check the bolt face? Is it nice and flat with a smooth face, or badly out of square with a "chain saw" finish?

Some things a pistolsmith can correct, and some things are better replaced. Nobody likes to purchase a new gun and then hear

from his pistolsmith that the slide has to be replaced before any custom work is done. But ask yourself, would Bill Elliott run the Daytona 500 with a crankshaft that was *excellent*, or just *okay*?

Custom Goodies

At last I have a box of inspected parts that will suffice for a good combat conversion. Now for all the custom goodies. That's right, the custom parts designed especially for the competitor.

Naturally, I prefer my own designs, but the pages of this magazine are full of all sorts of neat goodies from a vast array of suppliers. Bill Wilson is probably the largest and I have used



the



many of his parts in the past.

On this gun I will be using most all of my own Ed Brown parts, the High-Sweep beavertail, slotted hammer, Maxi-Well, heavy-duty guide rod and reverse plug, dovetail front sight, and ambi safety.

The Maxi-Comp and it's barrel sleeve will be manufactured from tool-steel bar stock and matched to the individual slide. These two pieces are not available for sale as accessory parts.

From other makers come the favorite Bo-Mar BMCS sight, a Videki trigger, and a Heinie mag button. A Bar-Sto six-inch Match Target barrel will be used. This is the one with extra material on all locking surfaces, intended for precise hand fitting.

Frame Work First

I usually start cutting on the frame of the gun by holding it inverted in a standard milling vise so the cut can be made in front of the trigger guard. This is just a rough cut to get most of the metal out of the way. Final shaping and checkering will occur later.

While handwork is still the hallmark of a master gunsmith, Ed was a tool and die maker first where he learned how to operate power machinery.

Next the frame is held in a special jig on the mill to make the cut for the Maxi-Well. This part requires one-quarter inch of the frame to be machined



away. Later, I will install the Maxi-Well in this cut to allow the huge magazine well opening required on a top-flight competi-

The High-Sweep beavertail grip safety requires a .25" radius cut on the frame with its center point on the safety pin hole. I can furnish a jig to pistolsmiths and customers to make this radius cut easy and foolproof. In the shop, I use a rotary table to remove 99% of the metal and use the jig only for precision hand finishing. With this done, we can now turn our attention to the front of the frame.

Most of the top pistolsmiths now remove the radius where your middle finger meets the trigger guard at the top of the forestrap. This can be done with a file, but being an old tool and die maker, I prefer to machine everything possible.

(This modification allows the gun to sit lower in the hand making for more natural sighting and better control, and allows a few more checkering rows at the top. It also feels considerably better and that doesn't hurt the shooter's confidence any.)

Forestrap Checkering

Now that all this metal has been removed, I'll start checkering the forestrap. I use another custom-made jig for layout of the beginning lines. Most of the gun plumbers I know now use some sort of aid to start the lines straight on the forestrap. A boring bar holding a threading tool is a very effective way to do this.

There are some larger firms using completely machine-cut checkering, but a sharp eye can tell the difference and I think the

customer at least deserves hand-finished checkering. Mine is completely hand-finished with checkering files and pointed up with 60° needle files.

Most guns are checkered at 20 lines per inch, or .050" spacing. Colt Gold Cups and all Colt housings have already been grooved to this specification so finishing and crossing is all that is necessary.

dedication to produce such work as Ed Brown.

However, 30 lpi checkering is gaining more popularity each year. Many customers want to show off a custom pistolsmith's talent for checkering and nothing does that better than three square inches of 30 lpi on the forestrap. With these small diamonds, boo-boo's are at least twice as visible.

Maxi-Well Installation

Now the checkering is finished on the forestrap, I can go ahead and install the Maxi-Well. I won't go into much detail here as the installation process takes a complete page of instruction intended for gunsmiths. Please note here that the Maxi-Well must be professionally installed and the reader should not confuse this part with the drop-in mainspring housing version made by Smith & Alexander.

Once the Maxi-Well is a permanent part of the frame, I'll begin the process of finishing the opening and replacing the mainspring housing hole. This was covered up during the process of welding the Maxi-Well to the frame.

Again, back to the vertical mill and the inverted jig. Now,



however, I'll use a 45° end mill to make the opening in the mag well. One-quarter inch of 45° lead-in is machined on all sides of the mag well. All surfaces are then hand-finished by careful hand-polishing. Then it's into the glass bead machine to replace the satin finish lost during all the previous work. The glass beads will show up any imperfections that must be corrected by more hand polishing.

More Checkering

Assuming my elbow is rested up from checkering the forestrap, I'll tackle the mainspring housing. Most all mainspring housings come from the factory grooved 20 lpi so all that must be done to completely checker them is to add another vertical line per side, and then cross them at 90°, or horizontal. Again, careful hand-finishing with a needle file produces the needed effect.

Thirty lines on the mainspring housing is somewhat harder, but still possible. Now that Colt is supplying plastic mainspring housings with all new guns, replacement is necessary anyway. I have found a supplier of aftermarket housings that cuts the

Continued on page 97

TEAM SPRINGFIELD CAPTURES STILL ANOTHER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP.

Team Springfield's championship tally for the 1990 season includes:



Doug Koenig

-Winner, 1990 IPSC World
Championship (Springfield P9)
-Winner, 1990 Bianchi Cup and
Bianchi Cup Speed Event with the
first perfect score ever recorded
(Springfield 1911-A1)
-2nd Place and Top Professional,
1990 Masters International Pistol
Championship (Springfield 1911-A1)
-5th Place, 1990 USPSA National
Championship (Springfield 1911-A1)
-6th Place, 1990 Steel Challenge
World Speed Shooting Championship
(Springfield 1911-A1)



Rob Leatham

-2nd Place, 1990 USPSA National Championship (Springfield P9) -3rd Place, 1990 IPSC World Championship (Springfield P9) -5th Place, 1990 Steel Challenge World Speed Shooting Championship (Springfield 1911-A1)



Allen Fulford

1-U.S. Civilian Bullseye Champion, 1990 Camp Perry National Matches, his fourth national championship (Springfield 1911-A1) -Winner, 1990 Masters International Pistol Championship, the first shooter to win the Masters title twice (Springfield 1911-A1)

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1990 IPSC World Championship Pistol

1990 IPSC
World Champion

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speed merchant, won the 1990 IPSC World Championship using a Springfield P9, he broke several old traditions and solidly established three very important new facts of life in the fast paced world of IPSC shooting:

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CHIP McCORMICK

A LOOK BACK AT IPSC GUNS FROM BASIC .45s TO RACEGUN .38 SUPERS

he evolution of the parts, accessories, and handguns used in IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) and related "Speed Shooting Sports" over the last 10 years has been of special interest to me.

Originally, because of my aspirations of becoming a champion shooter, I had to be totally aware of what components represented the leading edge of technology so that I could incorporate them into my equipment. Now, 10 years later, here I am in the business of designing and manufacturing today's generation of components that, I humbly submit, represent the leading edge of technology for the 1990's.

on funneled mag-well. I'm looking good now, right?

Wrong, home-boy, come out of the stone age.

When I finally arrived at the Nationals I found out that the Top Guns defined practical equipment as: cross-draw holster, pinguns, and 200 gr. SWC custom reloads. I felt like I just fell off of the banana wagon and found myself in another world.

These people are "Gamey" (pronounced gay-mee). But there doesn't seem to be a "G" in IPSC.

Well, I soon learned that there is a silent "G" in IPSC, and it stands for the most important factor when it came to



Naturally, as a serious competitor, I had to have the state-of-the-art equipment for each year. Telling you of my own first hand experiences should explain some of the evolution of IPSC equipment to date.

First Nationals

When choosing my equipment for the 1981 IPSC Nationals (my first) my main objective was to be *practical*. Since the "P" in IPSC stands for "Practical" it seemed obvious that I must be, well, *practical*.

My holster was a Davis Machiria model— concealable, pistol close to the body and high on the belt, positioned just behind the strong side hip. Mag pouches close and high also. This is practical.

The pistol was a Gov't model in .45 ACP. Throated and polished to reliably feed factory 230 gr. ball ammo, a crisp 4 lb. trigger pull, and high visibility fixed sights. And just to be little racy, an add-

winning matches. That's okay, "Practical" is nice, but "Gamey" is—exciting!

The "G" Factor

Now that I had identified the "G" factor, it was time to get down to the business of equipping myself properly with state-of-the-art technologies. Because of my limited experience in this sport, I had no other choice but to follow the leaders.

John Shaw won the '81 Nationals using a Clark "Pin-Gun" (1911 pistol with a big fat barrel extension adding weight and length), a Davis holster rig, and .45 ACP 200 gr. SWC cast bullets. Four months later I had the same set up and now my "G" factor was at the appropriate level, a competitive level.

In 1982 J. Michael Plaxco won using a 1911 .45 ACP pistol with a compensator (device for thrusting spent gases in a direction to work against recoil and muzzle flip) and a Bill Rogers plastic open front

holster. A few months later I had a Plaxco compensator gun and a Rogers holster.

Charles Kelsey and W.C. Wolff (America's best known gunspring maker) invented a patented magazine follower that allowed any standard 1911 magazine to hold one extra cartridge in the various calibers. That extra round was a big ded in IPSC matches.

First .38 Super

Early in 1983 Charlie Kelsey built the first IPSC .38 Super major pistol I am aware of. The .38 Super used lighter bullets (less recoil) and held more rounds (fewer reloads). I used a 1911 .38 Super in the '83 Steel Challenge (I blew a five second lead, worst choke I know of), the '83 Bianchi Cup and the '83 IPSC World Shoot.

Just for the record, to correct several .38 Super myths, the Steel Challenge, Bianchi Cup, and World matches I shot in 1983 are the first three times a .38 Super was used in a "Major" shooting match, to my knowledge.

In 1984 the .38 Supers and compensators began a domination of IPSC that lasted throughout the decade. Rob Leatham's success with a compensated .38 Super helped shape this trend.

Modular Guns

In 1985 the big thing in pistols was what is called the modular design. This was basically a 1911 pistol with a modified frame extending forward so the muzzle of the barrel locked up with the frame extension instead of the front of the slide.

Fred and Virgil Tripp and I in Texas, and Paul Liebenburg in California, were working on the concept about the same time. They were great for accuracy and "steel loads," but way too heavy. This concept didn't go too far, except in Bianchi Cup autos where weight is not so critical.

More Innovations

Late in 1985 Ernie Hill, the World Fast Draw Champ, showed up with a new line of holster products which incorporated "fast draw" technology. IPSC was ripe and ready for Ernie Hill Speed Leather.

I've never seen a line of products take over a sport so fast. By 1986 it was a question of who wasn't using these Ernie Hill holsters. They were the absolute best at the time, the fastest.

In '86 substantial factory sponsoring of top pro shooters became evident. I was fortunate enough to be one of these few lucky pros. I won my first Steel Challenge that year.

In my opinion, the biggest occurrence in 1987, with respect to equipment, was Jerry Barnhart winning the Steel Challenge and IPSC Nationals with a 1911 in .45 ACP, in spite of the extra recoil and reduced capacity versus the .38 Super. Those could be the last major victories for the .45 ACP because Jerry switched to

.38 Super the next year.

In 1988 titanium compensators for Steel Challenge pistols began a trend towards lighter, more specialized pistols for this match. I won my second Steel Challenge using a titanium comp, and introduced a new line of Chip McCormick Performance Products.

From 1981 to 1987 a three to four pound trigger pull was real gamey. Only a few very talented gunsmiths could make 2.5 lb. trigger pull that was dependable.

The introduction of computerdesigned hammers, sears, and triggers made by EDM (Electrical Discharge Machining) changed this. These components, so perfect in tolerance, design and finish, rendered a trigger job scientific versus hunt and peck. Now any knowledgeable gunsmith could make a dependable pull weight set to winning (G-Factor) standards.

High Capacity Craze

High capacity pistols were the hot subject in 1989. They had always been around, but this was the year that the big factory sponsors took a serious look at them because the courses of fire were becoming more offensive (G-Factor) than defensive.

It got serious when S&W hired gunsmith Paul Liebenburg to work full time at building special high capacity 9mm's, based on converting existing models, for the S&W team shooters. Springfield Armory could not sit back and let their shooters be outgunned, so they had their own full time gunsmith, Les Baer, do the same conversion concept on the P9 9mm. It kind of makes you wonder what's going to happen to the little guys when these big factories pull all the stops on the R&D budgets to give their teams the edge.

On To The Nineties

Electronic optical scopes were biggest

ty pistols designed to survive the high pressures, so are several independents like myself.

Now it's 1991, and gamey means appendix-mounted, away-from-the-body, adjustable-angle, open-front holsters with patented trigger-guard locking devices to keep the pistol from falling out inadvertently. And don't be caught without gamey adjustable-angle mag pouches that hold the mags out and away from the body.

The pistol for today is 1911 parts-

The Nationals and IPSC World Shoot were won with electronic sights. Get ready for the tidal wave.

news in 1990, after both the U.S. National's and World Shoot were won with these devices. The increasingly accuracy oriented (G-Factor) courses of fire and the monetary incentive for scope makers to miniaturize and lighten the scopes, while increasing the field of view, caused this evolution.

Also, by this time, it became obvious that converting high capacity pistols originally intended only for minor power factor 9mm Luger, meant considerably shorter service life for these pistols when loaded up to IPSC major power factor.

Subsequently, not only are Smith and Springfield working on new high-capacicompatible, high-capacity (18rds+), 135 gr. .355" caliber bullets, compensated, electronic sighted, with a 1.5 lb trigger job, and adorned with extensions (thumb-safeties, grip-safeties, etc.).

Oh yes, nylon equipment carry bags, electronic programmable shot reactive timers, and a special few shooters walking around in custom uniforms that look like big time race car drivers.

Future Shock

Where have we been and where are we going with the G-Factor?

At first there were big problems to Continued on page 78



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J. D. JONES

'HUNT FOR HUNGER' IS A PROGRAM TO DISTRIBUTE GAME MEAT TO POOR

eems as if I'm getting pretty good lately at pissing off the anti's who read *Handgunner* so I thought I'd throw them a crumb for a change. So here it is anti's, listen up.

On my last deer hunt of 1990 I didn't shoot anything.

Okay, now back to pissing them off!

I had a great time. Enjoyed most every minute of the hunt and quite a few of the other guys were successful in taking deer while everyone there enjoyed the hunt. The only thing I didn't really enjoy to the fullest was a chilly drizzle one afternoon.

Actually, this was a trophy buck handgun-only hunt at White Oak Plantation which is in Alabama, about two hours from the Atlanta airport and one hour from the

museum at Fort Benning. I might also give a plug to VALUE car rental who for \$17.95 a day, unlimited mileage, furnished a new V-8 Mustang LX and better service than I get from the majors 99% of the time.

Robert Pittman III owns White and the adjoining Red Oak while Bo, his son, does the work. Actually, I think that's the way it was probably supposed to work. In actuality everyone of the owners and staff did their dead level best to make the hunt a success for everyone. That includes very good accommodations, food and service. Frankly, it's southern hospitality at its best.

Trophy Deer Hunt

On to the important stuff. According to the hunt update sent to all hunters after the hunt 77 bucks and 341 does were seen. Sixteen total deer were harvested—three trophy bucks, one spike and 13 does. We really didn't do a very good job on the does as many more should have been taken.

Everyone had the opportunity to shoot at least one buck, however, this was a trophy, not a meat, hunt. The does were abundantly there for meat hunters.

I don't want this to sound like excuses but any deer hunter knows the weather and rut has a lot to do with deer movement. During our hunt it started with rain, then chilly, cloudy days, then a nice brisk sunny morning with their first frost.

The rut was a month ahead. I won't even guess what kind of numbers of deer



Larry Kelly (L) and J.D. Jones share a love of handgun hunting... and cars!

we would have seen during the rut. The big boys seemed to be laying back in thick stuff eating, conserving their energy and sharpening their spikes for the upcoming festivities. In addition, only a fool or anti-hunter would call a big buck stupid.

In Alabama you can legally take one doe and one buck *per day*. Obviously the name of the game is to thin out the does as there are far too many in relation to bucks. More bucks than does are born but their mortality rate is far higher with a disproportionate number of does reaching adulthood.

We were urged to shoot does and didn't do it. I can't speak for the others but when I had does around me it was at a time when the likelihood of a buck arriving was at its peak— either early or late in the day during prime time.

One day I had the worst luck of the hunters— hear that anti's— and I didn't see a deer. On the last day when I had to leave an hour earlier than normal there were at least a dozen deer moving around me when the guide came to get me because I wasn't at the pick up point. The guy in the stand nearest me said he had seen 26 deer that morning.

Hunting is done from tree stands or elevated blinds. You draw numbers to identify your stand— 100% fair. I'd never hunted this way before so it was a new experience for me. Can't say I've made up my mind about it. I like more physical activity but I'll give "stand" hunting another chance.

During the chilly drizzle I was in a dry blind. Had deer all over me. One little six point buck messed around 40 yards in front of me for over half an hour while does raided the corn patch adjoining. They made great decoys, but big daddy wasn't having any part of the act.

None of us hunted the same place twice. The drill was breakfast, morning hunt, lunch and blasting away, afternoon hunt, 'gator tail whores d' ovaries with a toddy, dinner and whatever.

Industry Hunt

Several industry members attended with their products and everyone had a chance to play with all of the toys there. Obviously it got noisy during midday. A total of 24 dedicated handgunners attended the hunt. Mike Wright from dropped his nice buck with a prototype Scout black powder handgun.

To make things a little more interesting there were prizes awarded in various ways. Paul Kazmierski won the free hunt for next year with

his 240 pound eight pointer, Jim Reiheld won the \$200 cash prize for his 147 pound doe which also puts him in contention for a free hunt for next year for the biggest doe taken during the season.

John Trussell won the drawing for the Thompson Center Arms commemorative White Oak Plantation pistol. Jim Reiheld also won the drawing for the Dominator conversion kit. Wayne Atchison won the 60% discount off on a Burris scope.

Robert was well pleased with this first Trophy Buck Handgun Hunt and will more than likely have another in 1991. You are invited. I'll certainly be there unless I have a scheduling conflict if it happens.

White Oak has other things to offer such as quail and duck hunting. Alabama seasons are long and bag limits generous. An out-of-state seven day trip license is only \$52. If you're from Georgia it's \$123 'cause that's what Georgia charges Alabama residents!

In my opinion White Oak offers more than a fair deal. I didn't shoot anything and went home happy; I've taken a fair amount of game on hunts and left unhappy never to return or recommend the outfit favorably to anyone. If you are interested in White Oak write them at Rt. #1, Box 25, Dept. AH, Tuskegee, AL 36088, call (205) 727-9258 or FAX (205) 727-3411. Robert and Bo represent what they have to offer accurately— no pie in the sky BS stories from these guys.

Hunger Hunt

Another hunt worthwhile considering is a Safari Club Fight Against Hunger Hunt. Generally billed as "celebrity" hunts, the idea is to supply meat to organizations such as Salvation Army who do the distribution.

You might look into starting such a program in your home town, it has proven successful all over the country although in some areas it may not be legal or there may not be an organization capable of handling and distributing large amounts of meat.

Herb Bobchin (10 Glynn Ct., Parlin, CT 08859 (201) 238-1128) organized one in Texas last fall. Both exotics and deer were available. Attendance was decent. The first animal was free— current prices on additional animals.

Over 3,000 pounds of good meat was given to the needy as about 30 antelope were donated to the Salvation Army as a result of that hunt. These type hunts vary in costs, location and participating organizations. They are however, worthwhile supporting and not just schemes

to get into your pocket.

Herb is in the process of organizing another handgun-only hunt of this type to be held in Texas this fall or winter. Contact Herb if you have any interest in attending and he will keep you informed of what's going on.

I did take one nice little whitetail buck this year. As a matter of fact I used a highly customized 357 Mag 8" S & W equipped with a Ultra Dot sight which I consider to be at the top of the heap of electronic dot sights.

First day of the season a decent eight point hesitated broadside in the open about 30 yards in front of me. Two minutes prior when I checked I had a dot. When I raised the gun I didn't.

Centered him in the tube and squeezed it off for a clean miss. DA'ed one into the ground and got the dot back—the battery simply lost contact, a not altogether unknown phenomenon with dot sights.

About that time a young man 12 gauged him with a rifled slug 24 steps from me from a position 60-70 yards to my left and a good bit ahead of me. Nice shot.

I was glad he got him rather than me as it was his first deer. However, it's a good illustration of while I was wearing a blaze orange vest and hat standing in ankle high grass the excited 18-20 year old young man "forgot I was there."

The buck I did take with the .357 was running toward me and took a 180 grain

Federal factory hollowpoint in the lower throat severing the large artery above the heart, penetrating the liver and coming to rest in the stomach without its jacket.

Decent performance for a .357 and certainly better than I've seen from some .44 Mag factory loads in the recent past. Truth of the matter is that a .22 LR would have had just about the same effect with the same impact. I'm still not a fan of the .357 for deer—it must be used carefully.

I would strongly suggest comparing factory .44 Mag loads before taking them hunting as the power of some of them is more on a par with what we used to load in .44 Specials than a true .44 Mag load and further suggest heavy handloads instead or ammunition from a specialist such as Cor Bon who loads them the way they should be loaded for hunting.

Eco-Terrorist Cow Killers

Heard of any problems regarding livestock being shot this hunting season?

I have information regarding one antihunting group encouraging anti's to dress as hunters and shoot farmers' livestock in an effort to make hunters look bad.

They also encourage teaching their children to "hunt" by killing cows, etc. No, it's no fairy story.

If you send stamped envelope to SSK (721 Woodvue, Wintersville OH 43952) and I'll send you some info on it.



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BY JOHN TAFFIN

TAFFIN TESTS

he .38 Winchester Centerfire first saw the light of day chambered in the Winchester '73 along with the .32 Winchester Centerfire and .44 Winchester Centerfire. If these nomenclatures do not sound real familiar, it is probably because they are all better known by

in .45 Colt. Since all three cartridges were approximately the same length as the the .45 Colt—and also less powerful since the .45 Colt also carried 40 grains of black powder—it was only natural for Colt to chamber their Single Action Army (Frontier, Peacemaker, HogLeg) in these three "rifle" cartridges.

The .38-40 was eclipsed in sales in the SAA only by the .45 Colt and .44-40, accounting for approximately 50,000 of the First Generation Single Actions from 1873 to 1941. Total produc-

tion of all calibers (more than 30) was 356,000 plus.

The .38-40 is a .44-40 necked down, which itself is basically a .45 necked down to .44 caliber. Perfectly good .38-40 brass can be made from .44-40 brass with properly designed sizing dies as offered by RCBS. The standard .38-40 sizing die does not push the shoulder back far

enough. However, using the RCBS trim die and extended shell holder, .44-40's are instantly transformed into .38-40's.

The .38-40 was also offered in the Colt DA Frontier and New Service, the Smith & Wesson Single Action, Double Action Frontier, and Triplelock, the Merwin & Hulbert, and is now being offered in both Single Action and Bisley replicas from Italy.

After 50 years of being dead and buried as far as American manufacturers were concerned, the .38-40 is once again being offered by Buckeye Sports in the Ruger Blackhawk Convertible supplied with two cylinders, one for the aged .38-40 and the other for the modern up-to-date 10mm.

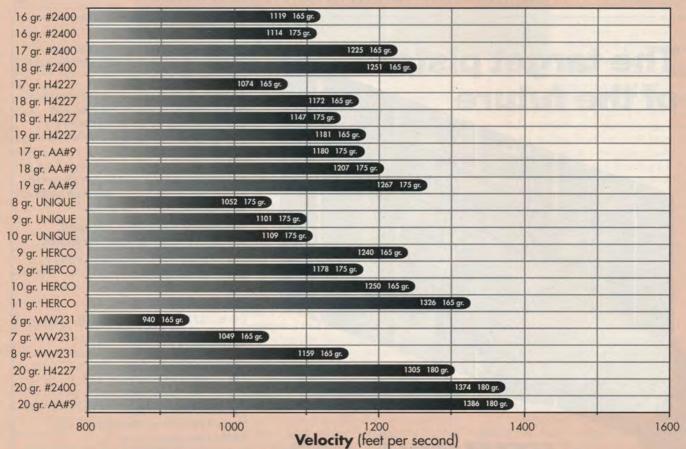
My first big bore sixgun was a Colt Single Action Army and a beautiful sixgun it was. I started with a Ruger Single-Six .22 and the Colt seemed the logical step upwards. At the time, new Colt Single Actions, the Second Generation guns, Ruger Blackhawks, and Great Western

the .38-40

their "short" names, .38-40, .32-20, and .44-40. The first two digit number represents the caliber and the second pair is the number of grains of black powder used in the original loadings.

At the same time that Winchester was chambering "The Gun That Won The West" in these three rifle cartridges, Colt was introducing the Single Action Army

High Performance Favorite Loads For The .38-40



WARNING: Neither the author nor American Handgunner accept responsibility for results obtained with this reloading information due to the inherent variation in handloading components and individual reloading techniques.

Frontier Models were heard of afar off, but rarely seen.

In 1957, I gladly forked over two weeks pay for a 43/4" Colt Single Action Army. With the standard blued and case-hardened finish, it was a prime example of the best from the Colt factory. The serial number range showed that is was made long before World War I and in spite of this it was in excellent shape.

The bluing was worn in a few obvious places, the case coloring had turned a beautiful light gray, the black gutta percha grips had lots of mileage on them, but this was a gun that had obviously been cared for. It was tight, with no pitting in the barrel and no cracks in the grips.

That Single Action Colt set me back \$90 and I was the proud owner of, not a .45 Colt, nor even a .44-40, but I possessed the third most popular chambering in the Colt Single Action production prior to 1941. The barrel simply said ".38 WCF" and I was the young owner of a .38-40.

It was a beautiful sixgun and amply powerful for this fledgling sixgunner, but the original Ruger Blackhawk, the Flat-Top, soon became readily available first in .357 Magnum and then in .44 Magnum and I let the .38-40 Colt get away.

A look at the specs of the .old 38-40 proves quite interesting. From a black powder sixgun, the 180 grain bullet had a muzzle velocity of 975 fps. The .38-40 is not a .38 at all, (which is really a .358), but is .40 caliber.

The ancient .38-40 turns out to be the exact equivalent of today's hottest defensive cartridges, namely the .40 S&W and the watered down 10mm in its FBI loading, which are both .40 caliber with a 180 grain bullet at 975 fps. The .38-40 chambered in a modern sixgun turns out to be the Smith & Wesson Model 610 in 10mm chambering.

The present .38-40 Winchester factory loading consists of a 180 grain jacketed soft point that clocks 872 fps when shot from a 6.5" barreled sixgun and over the triple skyscreens of the Oehler Model 35P.

At this speed it seems like a terrible waste of good jacketed bullets, but liability rears its ugly head once again and there are plenty of ancient black powder sixguns out there that could become bombs with hotter ammunition.

I also clocked some .38-40 ammo I had left over from the 1950's that were headstamped Western averaging 972 fps and the warmer Remington UMC going 1,023, all from the same 6.5" sixgun.

ALL HANDLOADS MENTIONED IN THIS ARTICLE ARE FOR USE ONLY IN THE RUGER .38-40 BLACKHAWK OR THE T/C CONTENDER! THEY ARE ESPECIALLY NOT FOR USE IN COLT SINGLE ACTIONS OR IN COLT REPLICAS.

The .38-40, being a bottle-necked cartridge as are the .32-20 and .44-40, is not as easy to reload as standard straight-walled sixgun cartridges such as the .44 Magnum or .45 Colt. Extra steps are

added as cases must first be lightly lubed, then sized, then wiped clean, before expanding, priming and reloading.

Bullet seating can also be a problem as the combination of a tight neck, or slightly oversized bullet, or both, will result in a collapsed neck unless bullets are seated and then crimped separately. This of course adds another step to the loading routine.

Case necks, while not quite as fragile as either the .32-20 or .44-40, dent quite easily and if they are fed into the die at any stage off-center, it is already too late. The brass is ruined. Slow and steady may or may not win the race, but it is the only way to approach the reloading of the WCF line of sixgun cartridges.

The accuracy of the .38-40 has always been hampered by revolver barrels with oversized groove diameters. The .38-40, like the .401 PowerMag, is a true 10mm but barrels were often many thousandths over size. This of course did nothing for accuracy.

The new Ruger Blackhawk .38-40 (available only from Buckeye Sports, 2655 Harrison Ave, SW, Dept AH, Canton OH, 44706) is built on the large Super Blackhawk sized frame and has a tight barrel as can be easily witnessed by the fact that it shoots 10mm loads exceptionally well with the auxiliary 10mm cylinder.

At last we have a properly chambered and barreled .38-40 sixgun, that is also far superior in strength to any previously offered .38-40 sixgun.

Lyman still offers one bullet design for the .38-40, #401043. This is a flat-nosed design of 175 grains weight, which comes out at 180 grains with my alloy. The 1990 Lyman catalog also lists this bullet as a 10mm, and most 10mm bullets can also be used with the .38-40.

I apply cannelures to any 10mm jacketed bullet, or cast bullet without a crimping groove, that I use in either the .38-40 or .401 PowerMag. They work just fine.

Bullet #401043, as well as jacketed 180 grain bullets in both soft-nosed and flat-nosed configuration, are available from Patriot Manufacturing (Banyan Plaza Suite 334, Dept. AH, Box 9000, Sebring, FL, 33870). They are also an excellent source for heavyweight bullet hunting loads and +P .45 Colt loads.

I've picked up two excellent, but out-ofproduction, Lyman bullet moulds in #40188, a 165 grain semi-wadcutter, and #401452, A Boser designed "Keith" style 200 grain bullet for the .38-40 and .401 Special. When I get tired of looking at the same guns at each of our local gunshows, I start searching out the old bullet moulds. Much cheaper and usually more productive.

The loading manuals, at least the older ones, give two sets of data for the .38-40. One will be found to be quite light, designed for older pre-WWII sixguns, and the other will be quite heavy to be used in the Model 92 Winchester. Loads for the Ruger .38-40 fall somewhere in between.

I have used the heavier loads in an eight-inch custom .38-40 T/C barrel from SSK and have gone to nearly 1,800 fps with the 180 grain Patriot JHP and 24.5 grains of #2400. This load, as all my .38-40 loads, is assembled with Winchester .38-40 brass and Winchester WLP primers. At 25 yards, this full house load is a tack driver.

Favorite loads for the Ruger Blackhawk .38-40 are assembled with either 10.0 grains of Unique or 18.0 grains of #2400. These loads are in the 1,200+ fps category with the 165 grain cast bullet or the 180 grain jacketed bullet.

Patriot has a new jacketed bullet that has more bearing surface and a concave base for increased powder capacity. With 20.0 grains of H4227 a full 1,300 fps is achieved with nearly one-inch 25 yard accuracy. This puts the .38-40 not all that far behind the .41 Magnum.

Most accurate loads for the .38-40 Blackhawk turn out to be Lyman's #40188 with 10.0 grains of Herco (1,250 fps), 10.5 grains of Blue Dot (1,031 fps), and 6.5 grains of 452AA (990 fps). All of these are in the one-inch at 25 yards category.

Best loads with the slightly heavier bullet #401043 are 16.0 grains of #2400 (1,119 fps), 18.0 grains of AA#9 (1,207 fps), and 9.0 grains of Herco (1,178 fps).

Hornady's new 170 grain XTP 10mm bullet makes an excellent .38-40 bullet. I add a cannelure right behind the shoulder, load it over 18.0 grains of #2400, and the result is tight little groups at 1,286 fps.

It is very difficult to justify the existence of the .38-40 anymore. It is not a silhouette pistol. Factory ammunition is expensive and under-powered. Most sixgunners that purchase the Ruger Blackhawk Convertible will probably use it with the 10mm cylinder most of the time.

Me, I'm a little more traditional. The .38-40 in the Ruger sixgun takes me back to my teenage years. That alone makes it worth the price of admission.

Add in proper handloads and I have an excellent sixgun for roaming the desert, foothills, and mountains, one that will handle anything I am likely to confront.

Since I had two Herter's .401 Powermags, I decided to have one made into a .38-40. Searching through the parts catalogs, I found a standard-sized single action grip frame and ebony grips to replace the comfortable, but cumbersome PowerMag grip frame.

The .401 then went southeast to Bowen Classic Arms (P.O. Box 67, Louisville, TN, 37777) with instructions to cut the barrel to 4.75" reshape the hammer and front of the frame, flat-top the rear of the frame around the rear sight, and finally, rechamber to .38-40. The result was a real packin' sized .38-40 sixgun.

Hmmm? I wonder what the Ruger .38-40 Blackhawk would look and handle like with a 4.75" barrel?





Greg Kramer's inside-the-waistband holster is both comfortable and concealable. Here it's shown with a .45.

A Hard Look At The Best Concealment Holsters

By Al Pickles

arrying a handgun concealed is definitely not an easy and simple matter. True concealment of an adequate handgun is a frustrating task fraught with compromises, some of which are highly dangerous to accept.

There are several legitimate and, yes, quasi-legitimate reasons for true and near total concealment of a handgun. "Total" is qualified only because it is really impossible. A pro will "bump you" in

order to find out if what he can't see is actually there. Pros, incidentally, walk both sides of the street.

Among the legitimate reasons for concealment of a handgun are, of course, select law enforcement assignments. Typically this would include undercover operations such as drug enforcement and stings. It is interesting to note that genuine concealment is actually so difficult to attain that many agents either forgo being armed

> or more or less openly carry a non-police type

weapon.

I do not include off-duty officers or many functional detectives because most of them can afford to print without too much concern. To "print" means to carry a gun which, while not visible, is detectable by the bulge.

Printing is part of a compromise whereby you carry an adequate handgun somewhere under your jacket that relatively few people will notice, given a lack of any specific reason to study your appearance. If a citizen recognizes you as an off-duty policeman and sees the bulge of a shoulder holster, he will probably note it with approval and a sense of security. If a

bad dude sees the print, he will probably clean up his act, at least for the moment.

Another legitimate reason for concealed carry is the licensed private citizen who has reason to protect himself, or maybe more importantly *herself*. Their occupations or their work locations may put them in harms way.

It is a sad commentary that crime and the subsequent breakdown of the criminal justice system has reached the point where many people fall into this category.

It is important that the person licensed for concealed carry strive for good concealment. While he prepares for the worst he certainly does not want to be misread by the policeman.

A Delicate Subject

The quasi-legitimate reason for concealed carry is a delicate subject. Maybe my background as a police chief and officer with 32 years of investigating violent crime will give some credibility to my thoughts on the matter.

Let's accept the fact that there are many people, maybe a large body of people, who have valid reasons to fear for their lives both in their homes and on the street. I am concerned for these honest and decent people who probably will be, or already have been, victims of violent crime.

I am concerned for people for whom a failing society offers little hope and no concern. People who by virtue of the political jurisdiction in which they live are absolutely forbidden the natural *right* of self-protection. People too proud to submit and who are just not going to take "victim" status as a way of life, be it victims of crime or The System.



For these honest people who have made their own choice to defend themselves at all cost, good concealment is an absolute must for reasons that surely are obvious.

Unfortunately, to attain concealment that good, they must compromise an adequate firearm and stopping power for a handgun of lesser value.

An adequate handgun is one which, by virtue of its caliber and capacity, will stop an attack before the attacker can do serious harm. Adequate ammunition is that which will assure incapacitation while presenting minimum danger to others in the area.

A full size .45 autoloading pistol with manstopping ammunition is about as close as you can come to adequate. This same pistol, however, is extremely difficult to conceal, especially in the warmer seasons where light clothing is the common style.

In the case of females, concealment on the person with an adequate handgun is darn near impossible.

Because more and more women are electing to own and carry a handgun rather than meekly submit to the human beasts who prey upon them, let's address their particular problems as they relate to handgun concealment.



Shoulder holsters can be had in both vertical (right) and horizontal modes of carry.



Women And Guns

Women attract attention from males—good men and bad. I have a sneaking hunch there is a natural design factor involved in this. Women dress to look good, be it a smart business outfit or close-fitting leisure wear. What women may find hard to comprehend is that evil men completely misinterpret their intentions.

Nonetheless, women are not about to start walking around in baggy pants and bulky tops. Of course there is a ton of psychology involved in all this and there



The bottom line, however, is that most women are going to dress to show themselves at their best. You just cannot do this and conceal an 81/2 inch, 44 ounce Colt .45 autoloader.

Concealing a handgun

wears. Women wear

different clothes than

men, obviously, and

effectively is very

much a matter of

what clothes one

their needs in a concealment holster

made to

holster.

are thus different.

accommodate the

fairer sex with a

Some rather exotic

attempts have been

Yes, you might be able to conceal a couple of .25 Berettas, but I can recite all kinds of horror stories concerning the pitiful stopping power of these cute little guns.

Pistol Purse

A lady's best bet, therefore, is to carry a powerful handgun about her person rather than upon it. Now the minute I suggest a purse for carry, the male reader will conjure up all sorts of images of her having to dig a pistol out from under a few pounds of common purse clutter, only to end up with a barrel full of paper clips, Nuprin pills, and maybe even a stubby pencil.

On the contrary, the purse I am suggesting has a separate compartment sand-



wiched between two sides of a functional purse with quick access from the outside. Actually, the gun is secured in its own quick draw holster within the separate sandwiched compartment.

When the purse is carried as a shoulderbag under the arm with the strap over the shoulder, all one needs to do is break through a Velcro seam at the front edge and draw her handgun. It is a much faster operation than reading the description. With practice, draw time rates at under one second.

While the Holsterbag is not inexpensive, one must remember that it is also a very beautifully designed and well constructed shoulderbag. It is constructed of unblemished cowhide with several dyes available. The maker, Guardian Leather of P.O. Box 277, Newton Center, MA 02159, offers a host of other interesting and innovative products for both men and women.

Horseshoe Holster

Most men, of course, do not carry handbags. Their firearm is most often carried on their person. If they dress stylishly, a full-sized firearm is most probably going to print. There is, however, one spot where it will conceal fairly well on athletically built people. That spot is a natural recess in the small of the back.



Guardian Leather's holsterbag is a solution to the inherent problem of a women concealing a "normal" holster in woman's clothing.



Andy Arratoonian of Horseshoe Leather in England makes first-class holsters.

What was needed was a specifically designed holster to take maximum advantage of this body recess while presenting the gun for a fast draw without foregoing gun security. This was a tough problem to solve and required the master talents of Andy Arratoonian of Horseshoe Leather fame.

Andy constructs an excellent small of the back holster which he calls, with a typical Yorkshire chuckle, the S.O.B. model. He offers variations for inside the pants or outside. You can also opt for thumb up draw or thumb down.

An airmail letter and several U.S. dollars will get you a fine catalog from which you will learn a great deal about design and quality. Write Horseshoe Leather at The Cottage, Shadow, Ripon, HG4 5BP, England—but do it fast as Andy is increasingly overwhelmed with orders. He is the holster supplier for the professionals worldwide.

Sparks Roadrunner

I have heard more people wax enthusiasm over the leather products of Milt Sparks than I can afford time to count. The editor, a passingly fair pistolero in his own right, is counted among those supporters. After hearing these people out, I decided to give one of his holster models a fair and lengthy test for concealability. The model selected, and incidentally most recommended, was the 60TK Roadrunner. I definitely was not disappointed.

The Roadrunner is a high-ride belt rig designed to accommodate autoloaders—and only the best autoloaders at that. This limitation excludes all but the Colt .45 Government, Commander and Officers ACP, as well as the Browning High Power, Beretta 92F, and the S&W 645.

There is no doubt Milt knows his guns and, correspondingly, his leather quality and design.

As a high ride concealment holster, the Roadrunner is a design of choice for those of us Westerners who often wear clothing such as the Levi jacket. The Roadrunner, complete with .45 autoloader, is worn with belt slots straddling the pants belt loop and over the right rear pocket. During normal activity in a Levi jacket, the gun and holster cannot be seen. Bending over is another matter.

Not to worry. For those of you who wear a suit coat or sports jacket on the city's mean streets, the Sparks concealment rig works very well indeed. Incorporated in the Roadrunner is a full-length front sight track for a snag-free presentation of your pistol when necessary.

An optional thumb break is available at extra cost but I find the snug fit of my sample negates the need for this safety device. Being just that—a safety device—I would not discourage you from its inclu-

Continued on page 70

H&K P7K3 TRI-CALIBER

The new Heckler & Koch P7K3 is a miniaturized version of the legendary 9mm P7 and it comes in .380, .32 and .22 LR!

By J. B. Wood

round 1965, Heckler & Koch designed their first handgun. Their former Mauser connections were apparent in its mechanism— it had several similarities to the Mauser HSc.

It also had some features that were uniquely H & K in design. They called it the HK4, the figure being a reference to its convertibility from .380 Auto to three other chamberings: .32 Auto, .25 Auto, and .22 Long Rifle. The change to the other centerfire rounds required only a switch of barrels, recoil springs, and magazines.

The .22 LR conversion had one other step, the reversal of the breech face in the slide, to change the head recess and reposition the impact location of the firing pin point. When everything was done according to the instructions, the HK4

Auto and .22 LR kit.

The HK4 was an excellent gun, but it may be that converting it from .380



The author liked the handling characteristics of the HK plinker.

around

HECKLER & KOCH GMBH

For a few years, Heckler & Koch offered only their "major caliber" pistols, in .45 Auto and 9mm

Luger. The success of their unique P7M8 and P7M13 pistols led them to design a new .380 convertible gun that is a reduced-size version of the 9mm squeeze-cocker. They named it the P7K3, and again, the number refers to the three cartridges it uses—the .380 Auto, .32 Auto, and .22 Long Rifle.

The conversion to .32 Auto requires



The caliber change-over is relatively simple, as Wood explains in the text. The tri-caliber HK comes with everything you need to change calibers.

worked perfectly in all calibers.

Most US shooters were not particularly interested in the .32 and .25 conversions, and toward the end of its production, the pistol was mostly sold as a .380

to .22 LR and back again, with the special screwdriver provided, was a little too tricky for the average shooter. Whatever the reasons, it apparently did not sell as well as expected. It was discontinued



The author points to the port side of the ambidextrous magazine release button, which is pushed downward to release.

only a change of barrel and magazine. A fitted wrench is provided to remove and replace the barrel retaining nut.

The .32 Auto round has long been popular in Europe, where it is called the Continued on page 108

HANDGUNNING HINTS

Trigger Management

Bennett Viken & Robin Sutton



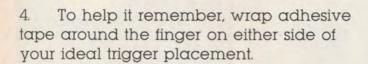
 Slack should be taken up while assuming the firing stance.

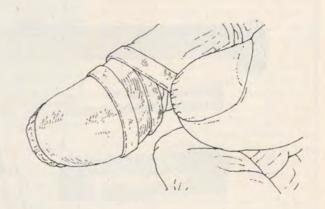
2. Creep is a more precise matter. Only practice can determine how much to take up, keeping the gun on that delicate edge of firing while squaring up the sights.

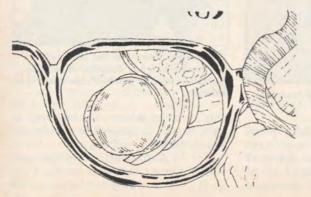


Matin.

3. But sometimes the gun goes off before the sights are aligned. If it happens too often, the cause could be a forgetful trigger finger.



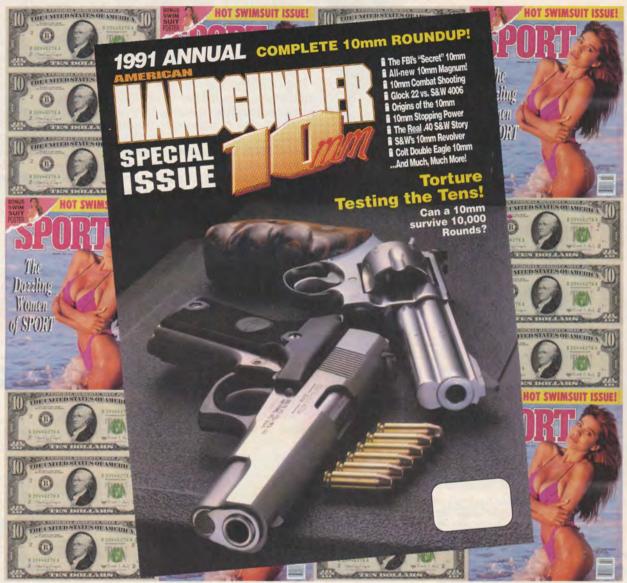




5. Concentrate on feeling the trigger when taking up slack in practice and before long you'll find its memory restored.

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hether you like it, dislike it, or could care less, the 9mm DA self-loader is here to stay. Every day it becomes more firmly entrenched in American law enforcement, a fact that is praised by some and bemoaned by others.

Of course, the 9mm versus .45 controversy rages on, and, as with all human conflict, will no doubt continue as long as one proponent of each viewpoint is still around to argue. I'm not about to open up that can of worms.

We will, however, examine one of the newest versions of the so-called *Wundernines* and delve a bit into the philosophy of police weapon training.

What follows are one man's thoughts on pistolcraft (derived from years of competition, street carry, and training hundreds of police officers) and is sure to start a fight at any IPSC match.

The Gun

First, the gun. Editor Hopkins fondly refers to S&W's "Gun Of The Week." While that may be somewhat of an exaggeration, it is not too far off the mark. The subject of this article, however, is a specialty weapon aimed at a specialty market— a DA-only auto for police.

Our subject gun is in a class by itself. It can only be fired by trigger-cocking, and therefore is really a single-action. However, DA-only (double-action only) is what most folks want to call it, and so shall we.

The new S&W guns are numbered 5946 and 6946. They are, respectively, a 15-shot 5906 and a 13-shot 6906 that have been modified to fire by trigger cocking only. The "4" in the third digit of the number designations refers to the DA-only feature.

In appearance, the difference between a 5906 and a 5946 is superficial. Naturally, there is no safety/decocking lever. The hammer is curiously shaped, being somewhat reminiscent of a pendulum clock





counterweight. The trigger has a slightly different configuration.

The rest of the weapon, externally, is pure 5900 or 6900 series. Of the two guns I handled, the 5946 was fed only a couple of magazines due to the short time I had it. The 6946 was fired extensively, and is the basis upon which my conclusions have been reached.

Test Firing

Dry-firing this new action produces one of the most awful trigger pulls I have ever encountered. It is a long, heavy crunch, with a disconcerting click halfway through.

The hammer, at rest, remains flush within the slide cut-out. When the slide is



At left, the hammer flush with slide (dry-fire mode) and protruding (charged, ready to fire). One of the author's test targets shows the potential of a DA-only S&W auto.

cycled manually, however, things get a bit different. The hammer now protrudes nearly half-inch and the trigger sets back .388", thus shortening the stroke.

This improves things a bit. The click is still there but not nearly as noticeable. What is objectionable is the fact that the trigger "stacks" quite heavily near the end of the stroke, very similar to an untuned Colt Python.

It is important to understand the difference between these two trigger pulls. Empty, in a dry-fire mode with the slide not being cycled, the trigger pull is horrible. With the piece charged and ready to go, the pull is manageable, but still not what we would call good.

Continued on page 73

'm not a gambler. One time during my youth I thought seriously about gambling. The time was 1954 and my beloved Cleveland Indians had set the baseball world on fire by winning 111 regular season games. The Tribe was loaded with living legends such as pitchers Bob Feller, Bob Lemon, Early Wynn and Mike Garcia, three of whom won 20 or more games that year.

The Indians would meet the New York Giants in the World Series and I laid down my bet. Four games later, all hope had been lost and the Indians were in total disgrace. My gambling days were over and I'd learned a cheap lesson.

From that time on I have refused to gamble so when Hamilton Bowen of Bowen Classic Arms offered me a wager, I turned it over in my mind very carefully. I quickly reviewed the facts, and promptly decided this was no gamble, this was a sure thing.

Bowen has long been known for his custom work on Rugers, such as converting both single-action Blackhawks and double-action Redhawks to everything from .25 Hornet to .32-20 to .45 Colt and even the .475 and .500 Linebaugh.

Although Bowen had never really said it in so many words, I got the feeling that as far as he was concerned, there were only two types of revolvers— Rugers and everything else.

Then it happened. Perhaps, I just caught him at a weak moment. Whatever it was, he mentioned to me that he would like to start offering a service of making cylinders for Colt Single Actions. I could hardly believe my ears. Bowen was interested in making cylinders for the old Colt Single Action!

I hesitated not a moment and offered him the loan of a few cylinders from my parts inventory for him to study and measure, with both Second and Third generation cylinders being sent off to his Ten-

nessee shop. Shortly thereafter, Bowen informed me that he thought he was ready to start making cylinders for the old Colt.

Only thing is Bowen needs a couple of old Colts to practice on. Again I hesitated not a moment but said, "I have a couple of Colt Single Actions that I am not completely satisfied with. Would you like to practice on them?"

It was at this point that Bowen mentioned the word gamble. After all, he had never worked on Colt Single Actions and I could wind up with two custom Colt Single Actions or I could wind up with junk.

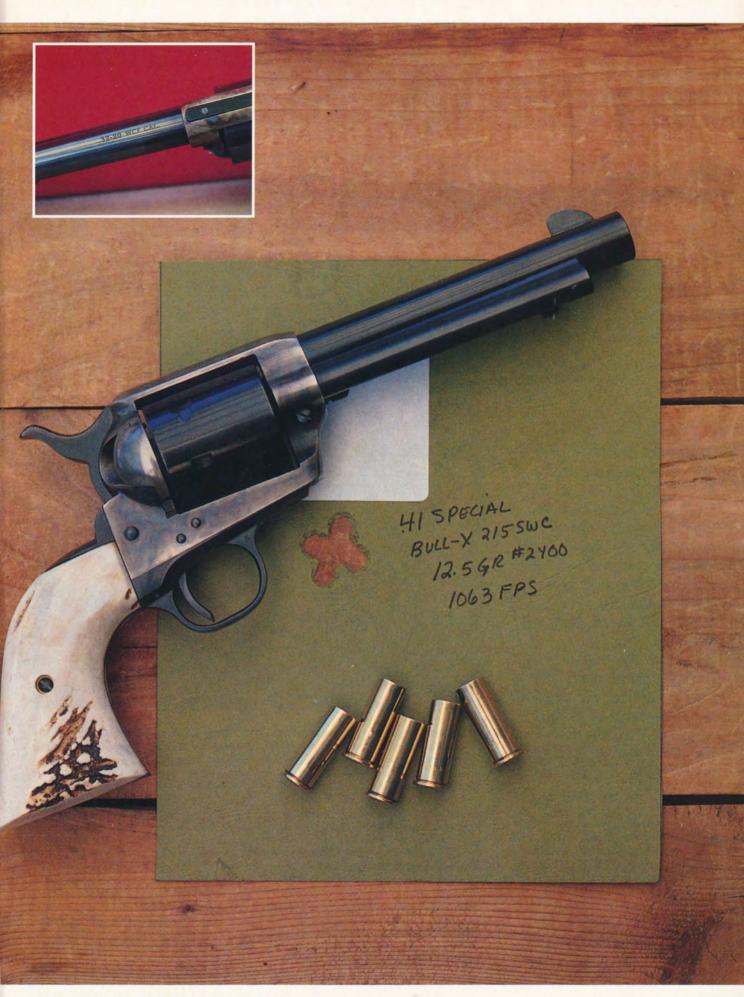
Continued on page 88

CUSTOM Gele-Actions

Perhaps the finest craftsman to ever lay hands on the single-action revolver, Hamilton Bowen is now offering his consummate workmanship on the classic Single Action.







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Photos by Nyle Leatham

nternational competition has a special aura about it, a unique feeling of camaraderie and fellowship that comes only from knowing that you are competing in the very same event as a brother athlete from Sri Lanka, England, Italy, Singapore or New Zealand. This sharing of fair competition with the exhilaration of victory and the bitterness of defeat is somehow different when the contest is waged on a worldwide, international format.

This is why the Olympics are considered the pinnacle of sport. This is why the World Cup of soccer is the single most-watched athletic event on earth. And this is why the IPSC World Shoot attracts shooters from every corner of the globe to compete one against another in an international match where each country's champion can battle to win against every other nation's chosen elite.

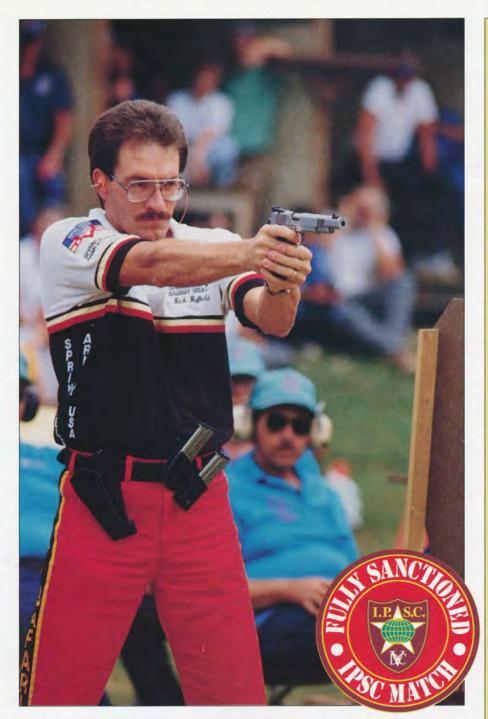
Unfortunately, there are two problems with international athletic competition today—politics and money. It is

outrageously expensive to bring together competitors from all over the world to one location. Moreover, even with an unlimited budget, you still could not host a true world event because various political constraints prohibit the athletes of one country from competing against those of another.

So it is with all of this in mind, as well as another significant factor that we'll address in a moment, that *American Handgunner* has created the first truly international shooting match for all our readers regardless of their politics or their economics. For the first time, you can compete against the world on a fair and even footing through the *American Handgunner* International IPSC Postal Match

This is a fully sanctioned IPSC match, certified through the International Practical Shooting Confederation's world headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. Furthermore, the course of fire (four stages, 35 rounds) is designed by the impartial board members of the International Range Officers Association (IROA).

And this brings us to a convenient moment to mention the other "significant reason" for American Handgunner to host the IPSC Postal Match. IROA is a fledgling organization working solely through volunteer services of a dedicated core of directors to promote and establish an international standard of excellence for Range Officers world-wide. Drafting procedures, formulating policy and collating a body of "precedent law,"



IROA seeks to create a global cadre of certified Range Officers who work together through IROA headquarters to further stimulate the growth and prosperity of safe, well-run IPSC matches throughout the world.

The problem is that IROA is desperately under-funded and *American Handgunner* has decided to donate the entire proceeds from the *American Handgunner* International IPSC Postal Match to the worthy cause of IROA's development.

We are charging a modest fee of \$2.00 per shooter in order to cover the expense of postage, clerical handling and data entry of literally thousands of contestants world-wide. However, *American Handgunner* is going to absorb all of the

considerable costs involved in processing and administering the IPSC Postal Match and we are donating every cent of the \$2.00 per shooter entry fees to the International Range Officers Institute.

So come and join in the first truly international IPSC match! Find out how you rank against the best shooters in the world! We will publish the results in the November/December 1991 issue of *American Handgunner* (on the newsstand in October, 1991). And when we say we'll publish the results, we don't just mean the top 10 or the top 20; we mean that we will publish the entire match results, every person who shoots! You will see your name in *American Handgunner* and you will be able to compare your score to the world!

How To Enter

The American Handgunner
International IPSC Postal Match is
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host. The free entry packet includes
one complete course of fire description
for the four stages designed by IROA
(International Range Officers Institute)
and one set of score sheets. It is up to
the hosting Match Director to make
the necessary number of Xerox copies
of the official score sheets.

Also included in the free "IPSC Postal Match Kit" are complete details and instructions for setting up the four stages (35 rounds total) and properly filling out the score sheets. The Match Director will return each and every score sheet to American Handgunner for processing and will not simply tabulate his club's scores and mail those scores in.

The Match Director will include travellers checks, international cashier's check or money order made out to the International Range Officers Institute (IROA) for the total number of shooters at \$2.00 per shooter.

Designed to be shot at your own club, the four-stage match can be run on one mid-size range.

The scoring will be done at American Handgunner using the worldstandard MSS (Match Scoring System) scoring program designed for IPSC.

This is an athletic event in its purest sense. Competition merely for the sake of striving for excellence. Competition merely for the the feeling of camaraderie of shooting with thousands of your fellow IPSC shooters world-wide. Competition merely for the joy of it.

There are no shiny trophies, there are no brass plaques. Nor yet are there any medallions or ribbons or cups. There are no awards because the reward is the shooting itself. Like the marathoner who runs only to finish the race, it is a contest within oneself.

Shoot the American
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WORLD SHOOT DOM: DOM:

By Nyle Leatham

n 1983 at World Shoot VI in Yorktown, Va., defending titlist Ross Seyfried and the boisterous United States gold team gave Rob Leatham a ride on their shoulders.

A new chapter opened in IPSC history. The new champion, a 22-year-old pistol shooter from Arizona, was destined to stun the world of the International Practical Shooting Confederation, winning World Shoot VII in 1986 in Florida and World Shoot VIII in 1988 in Venezuela.

No other name than Rob Leatham appears more than once on the world championship trophy presented by Jeff Cooper after he

founded IPSC at Columbia, Missouri in 1976.

World Shoot IX Australia Downunder, a 30 stage match with 300 shooters from most of the 37 IPSC countries present, was held October 13 to 20, 1990. The setting was a spacious new range specially built at the South Australia State Shooting Park 30 kilometers north of Adelaide.

There with the blustery west wind of the far southern spring blowing chill off the gulf of St. Vincent and flights of pink breasted Galah parrots squawking overhead, Leatham's turn came to smile and carry a new winner.

It was not his first boost up for this new champion. The best practical shooter in the world, proven by his 1280.6405 match points is Leatham's friend,

student, and Springfield Armory sponsored teammate, 22-year-old Doug Koenig.

The win frosted the cake of

a very good year for the young hunter from the woods of Pennsylvania, which included winning the 1990 NRA Bianchi Cup with the first perfect score ever and a strong second place in the Masters.

But at age 30 Rob is not bowing out gracefully. He says he is keeping open the empty spot in his trophy case and Doug had best keep the World Cup shined. But the long Leatham chapter finally found a pause at the 1990 World Shoot IX Australia Downunder. Even

500

Doug Koenig of the USA won the World Championship.

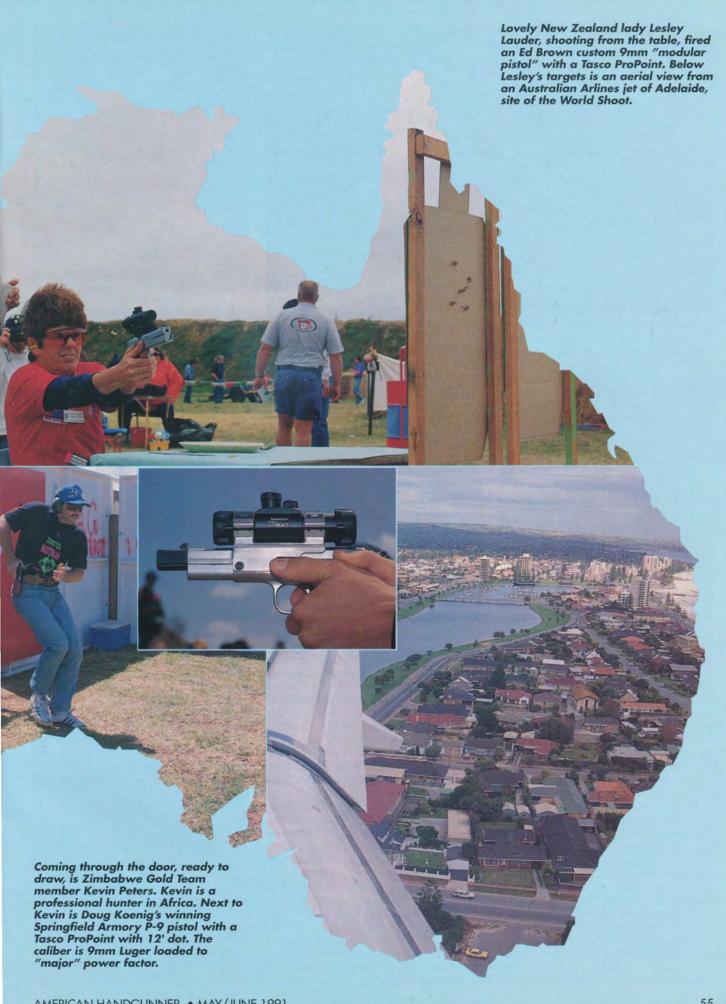
Rob may have contributed to the collective sigh of relief at his getting off the tight rope.

And so we have a new name on the President's Cup

Unlike some matches, the big prize is not money. The ultimate kick of this game is having your name on that travel-battered old trophy which you don't get to keep no matter how many times you win it. Douglas Koenig is the new name spelled out. Be prepared to hear it a lot and mostly wrong. Say it "Kay-nig."

The slightly tilted cup of over-polished gilded brass and cracked wood survived its most recent journey, 18,000 odd miles from Mesa, Ariz., to Pipersville, Penn., via Ade-





laide, Australia. Then it fell to Doug's mom Barbara Koenig to cart the thing down to the local trophy shop and pay for engraving. After winning the big one you have to do it yourself.

The inscription reads,

"The President's Cup
presented by Jeff Cooper
founder and president of
International Practical Shooting Confederation.
Practical Pistol Champion of the World"

The winners, their countries and the irregular years of each world shoot are inscribed on the plate, but here we've added where the matches were held:

Ray Chapman	USA	1975	Switzerland
Jan Foss	Norway	1976	Austria
David Westerhout	Rhodesia	1977	Rhodesia
Jimmy von Sorgenfrei	S. Africa	1979	South Africa
Ross Seyfried	USA	1981	South Africa
Robert Leatham	USA	1983	Virginia
Robert Leatham	USA	1986	Florida
Robert Leatham	USA	1988	Venezuela
Douglas Koenig	USA	1990	Australia

Winner's Gun Banned in US

There is a certain irony that the whole shooting world saw an American win The

Big One with a lightning fast gun and cartridge combination outlawed at home in the US.

Koenig's winning handgun was a Springfield Armory factory-customized 18-round P9 shooting the controversial "9mm Major" caliber. (Other IPSC countries may have more problems with his use of the Tasco ProPoint electronic optical dot sight than his choice of caliber.)

Jerry Barnhart took a close second with 1276.2911 points. His Wilson-customized Colt .38 Super was also equipped with a ProPoint. Barnhart triggered the trend toward acceptance of the large-tube electronic dot optical sights in speed shooting, winning the 1990 US Nationals with one.

Leatham, with 1263.7700 points, placed third shooting a Springfield Armory P9 in 9x21 (9 JLE) with open Bo-Mar sights, although he too has been lately working the kinks out of dot sights.

It's a fairly safe bet that after we iron out Major 9 our next big rules hassle will be whether dot sights are "practical." Does a bad guy wait while you switch on your sight? Or will fast-changing technology give us automatic switch-on, long-lasting batteries, or even dots that don't need batteries?

Or are we ready to admit that this is just a game and "practical" cannot be defined or measured?



A decade of American dominance continued.

With J. Michael Plaxco in 4th place and Brian Enos in 5th, the US mens Gold Team won the team event. US silver team members Frank Garcia and Douglas Boykin were 6th and 7th with the last gold team member Mark Mazzotta in 8th place.

Highest non-US shooters were Australian gold team members Ed Danko, Ken Carter and Craig Ginger at 9th, 10th and 11th respectively. Jethro "Jet" Dionisio from the Philippines, who won the Steel Challenge 1990 and placed third in the US Nationals, ended up 12th overall. A promising young Italian, Ozvald Gerstl, came in 13th place.

Another Filipino, Christopher Lacson, was 14th; John Dixon of the US was 15th with Australian Glen Cook rounding out the Top 16.

The Top 16 Shoot-Off was a separate event. Appropriately, Koenig and Barnhart won lst and 2nd again.

Australia's top shooter, national champion Errol Thomas, fell victim to gun malfunction. He zeroed one stage and placed 38th.

Many other US shooters turned in respectable scores, including John Sayle at 23rd and Russ James who, despite duties as manager for both US gold teams, earned 24th.

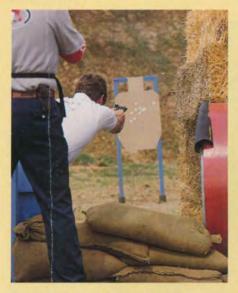
Painfully absent were the South Africans, the only real competition for the US, capable of booting out any of the top winners. The Springboks fell victim to politics



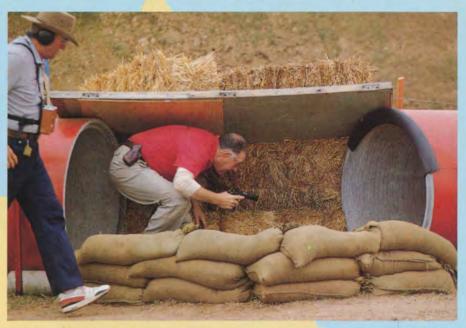




Jean-Pierre Denis, president of IPSC, proudly wears his American Handgunner World Shoot cap. He took it off to crawl through the tunnels (right).



Defending world champion Rob Leatham (above) shot a Springfield Armory P-9 pistol in 9x21. He finished third overall, just losing by a whisker to his protege, Doug Koenig (far right, shooting from inside a concrete pipe). French team member Bernard Motte (left) shot a .45 caliber extended frame "Scorpio Model."



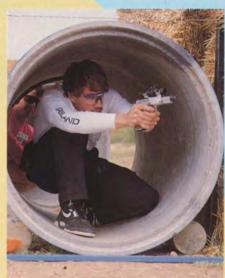
s insoluble to IPSC, and were not allowed in by Australia. Had they been, other countries would have withdrawn.

As a sop to fair play, a world individual championship, albeit with its World Shoot X designation now withheld, is scheduled in Johannesburg in fall 1991.

US Ladies Win

Defending ladies world champion Debby James of Connecticut retained her title although her chances looked grim on Day 4. Mrs. James started a stage without a magazine in her gun! She fought her way back to win top lady and 62nd place overall.

Second lady was Kippi Boykin, third was Shirley Hamilton and fourth Sharon Kimbrel as the US ladies gold team also took top team and individual honors. Shirley Hamilton won the top eight lady's shoot off.



IROA Runs The Show

Also a milestone in IPSC history, World Shoot IX was a shakedown, the first wholly run match by the International Range Officers Association. This unsung group provided skills and professionalism to match increasing performance of the competitors—and of no less importance.

IROA director Nick Alexakos of Canada and his associate Dave Arnold of Virginia worked in close cooperation with Australian match director John Wholohan and his assistant John Horgan. The 40 range officers came from all over the globe, perhaps none harder working than Army Captain Sarath De Zoysa from Sri Lanka and Jose Orus of Ecuador on Stage 10.

A Tale Of Two Tunnels

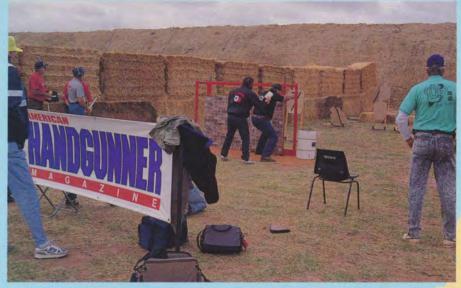
Stage 14, "The Tunnel Run," was probably the most controversial. Appalled at the small size of the pipes, Leatham did a quick draw of his \$100 bill to file a formal protest. Plaxco protested Mike Hudson's narrow steel popper targets as not legal under IPSC rules.

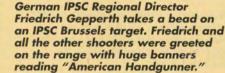
Leatham's protest was rejected. Plaxco's was upheld, and the stage was reshot with paper targets.

Worth a whopping 100 match points, the Tunnels proved pivotal. The big guys scraped through on bleeding hands and knees. The little guys could duck walk bent over.

Koenig shot it in 14.01 seconds, taking the lead held by Plaxco during the first half of the match and never letting up. And playing the profitless but irresistible "What If" game, Leatham of course could have won *if* he had not fired one extra shot on the Virginia Count stage two.

And Barnhart would have won if he had not blown a dead center hole in one of the





indistinctly marked no shoots. Koenig too had his full share of opportunities to throw it all away but did not. Rather he shot with cold and brilliant concentration clear through to the finish in the dark of stages 28 and 29.

Same Ole Guns

An informal survey of shooting equipment revealed little new to Americans, except maybe those long heavy brown leather holsters the Aussies like.

It was obvious that US designs set the trends. There were lots of Colt 1911s and their clones, most tricked out with full-house modifications and compensators. The Aussies shoot mostly 1911s with the very fine home grown barrels made by Tony Lissner.

Most top shooters used .38 Supers followed by a growing number of Major 9s and back in the pack a majority of .45s, easier to handload in much of the world.

Safariland holsters were, obviously, the most popular.

English shooters Stephen Senn and Mark Derbyshire and friends wore shirts reading "Team 9mm Major" so you know where the Brits stand on that issue. In fact Senn said that he is not at all happy with the USPSA ban of 9mm Major as

"unsafe," seeing it as slandering the guns and loads his company Thornlands Shooting Center Ltd.. markets with British government proof house certification.

(The Major 9 plot thickened in January, 1991. Mark Derbyshire reported that preliminary pressure test results in a reputable laboratory, Accurate Arms, of his Major 9 loads with a Finnish powder came in well *under* American SAAMI standards. One speculates that Dave Stanford and USPSA may have to rethink their hasty ban. Or have politics gone beyond deciding the issue on its merits?)

No Worries, Mate

Competitors reported minimal inconvenience bringing guns into Australia, thanks to effective liaison by IPSC Australia.

Most US shooters had a blast in far off Down Under. They visited pineapple plantations in tropical Queensland, dived on the Great Barrier Reef, rode steam trains through the rain forest up north and scouted the eye-popping scenery of the Gold Coast beaches.

Brian Enos may have been the only one brave enough to experience the insanity in Cairns known as "bungee jumping." Headfirst off a tower 150 feet above water, suspended by elastic ropes on your feet? No way!

At a range party many shooters tasted tender barbecued kangaroo shot from the oversupply at Dean Herd's Spear Creek Ranch, home of the famous annual Bush Ranger Shoot.

And some flaunted the rain with authentic oilskin cattleman coats from the Nioa Trading Company, looking like *The Man from Snowy River* of Banjo Patterson's beloved poem. The Americans loved Australia and Australians, (especially pretty lady shooter



Kevin Peters of Zimbabwe launching into action under the watchful eye of Range Officer Bob Smith on a stage called "Hotel Room."

Bill Hamilton of California went Down Under for the World Shoot as "Shirley's husband." His wife Shirley is on the US Ladies Team that won the gold medal. Shirley won the ladies top 8 shoot-off. Bill and Shirley shoot 9mm Major Springfield Armory pistols.





Philippine national champion Jethro Dionisio springs into kneeling position (above) while match winner Doug Koenig (right) leans around a barricade on a stage sponsored by American Handgunner.

Michelle Watson who came 2,000 miles from Perth), but they returned home with renewed appreciation for the US advantage.

It's ironic that beautiful, wide-open, under-peopled Australia, as naturally suited to a liberal common sense firearms policy as ever was the American west, should instead copy Britain's burdensome licensing laws, especially for pistols.

Sales and import taxes on guns and gear are frightful. A Dillon RL1050 costs 2.5 times its US value. Still the Aussies are no-quarter competitors, ready to buy a Fosters' for a guest, sing "Waltzing Matilda" with him in the Ettamogah Pub, and then shoot the pants off him. 'Struth, mate!

Australian IPSC RD Michael Hudson hopes the two years of headaches and the expense of World Shoot IX will help raise Australian enthusiasm and skill levels for future international competition.

US Disrupts IPSC Assembly

Just before the match a quorum made up of the 25 IPSC regional directors and their assistants sat next to their national flags around a square of long tables in a big room in Adelaide's Hindley Hotel. To have international shooting, there has to be international talk.

President Jean-Pierre Denis of Belgium called for order. Duty holsters, no-shoot poppers, Eagle magazines and regional residency motions filled day one.

Day two opened on the mean agenda item, Denis' dispute with Dave Stanford. Should the US, IPSC's parent country and most powerful member, be censured or even disaffiliated for violating IPSC principles with the Major 9 ban?

And would the Americans fly 8,000 miles and find the assembly action might bar them from shooting?

Despite months of reassurances, that specter was alive to greet them in Adelaide. RD Michael Hudson of IPSC believed the rumor resulted in many cancellations and some financial strain on the match organizers.

Dave Stanford asked USPSA board member John Sayle to present the US defense. Since I was present at the assembly meeting, Sayle asked me if I was reporting for *American Handgunner*. I answered yes.

He said, "We have delicate matters to discuss. I cannot present my arguments with you in the room." He then asked the group to eject me. I was the only professional reporter present. This was done.

Later, the German RD Frederick Gepparth, among others, asked me if I knew why. "The US defense was eloquent," he said.

"But since Americans are reputed to favor freedom of the press, what did they not wish you to hear?" he asked.

And of course since I could not be prevented from reporting the proceeding from tapes, notes and personal accounts, I could then as now only speculate.

But obviously Stanford and Sayle believe all such executive meetings of IPSC as well as USPSA should be not be open to observers whose accounts might differ with "official reports."

Also in view of the bitter recriminations associated with the Stanford's re-election then in progress, they chose not to tolerate an observer perceived as critical.

But to the business at hand.

After a tempestuous discussion pro and con of Major 9 and the US action, the assembly on a split and confused vote approved the American action.

President Denis, as a European, took this as a vote of no confidence and resigned,

Continued on page 96



BIANCHI GUN! BIANCHI GUN!

That very special breed of revolver designed specifically for the demanding Bianchi Cup match is establishing a whole new dimension of performance. Accuracy and ergonomics. And the man rechnological refinement and human engineering. And the Technological refinement and human engineering designs for at the leading edge of the most advanced new designs. Bianchi guns is Pennsylvania pistolsmith Jack Weigand.

By Hank Logan Photos by Ichiro Nagata





hey said it couldn't be cleaned, but each year they made the pilgrimage to Columbia, Mo. Year after year the faithful slung thousands upon thousands of slugs at the cardboard infidels in the quest for a perfect Cup.

Many fell along the wayside and only two are left who have never failed to answer the call, Tom Campbell and Frank Behlert. The names of the victors include the most famous marksmen to ever champion a cause— Fowler, Enos, Leatham and Pride.

Journey after journey the standard was raised higher until at last a young knight from the East barely out of his vigil would be the first one to claim the Cup, clean. Doug Koenig was his name.

After Koenig claimed the Bianchi Cup with a 1920-157X it would seem as if the crusades were over. The knights could return to their fiefdoms, harvest the bounty of their green lands and listen to the bards sing of their past deeds of valor.

But no sooner had young Koenig started to drink the nectar from his Cup than one of the old warriors sounded forth the clarion call of yet one more Bianchi Crusade. The Quest for the Perfect Bianchi Cup, a 1920-192X.

A new challenge for those who pick up the gauntlet means many will look for new iron for their scabbards. The veterans of past campaigns know the difficulty of this Quest.

In the search for Perfect Iron for the

up box that once held rat poison. Along with it came a letter that tells more about him and the gun than any nonsense a modern day ministrel could yodel or dribble out of his laptop computer.

The Pistol

"The pistol you have in your hot little hands is referred to as the 'W. B. T. Model.' That stands for 'Weigand Bianchi Tool.'

"For the most part we look at all pistols as tools. Tools should be aesthetically appealing but most of all should make the job we are doing easier and faster. I look at aesthetic appeal as a sales point and the ability to be functional as a resale tool.

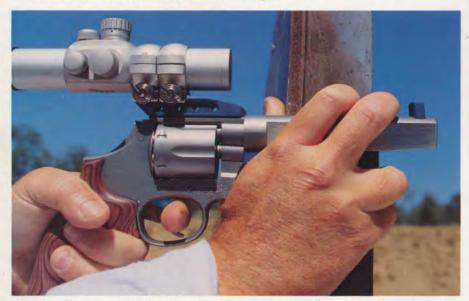
"After you test fire this pistol you will probably agree it works better than it looks."

The Barrel

"This unusual looking barrel started life out as a Power Custom Grand Master barrel. Ron starts with a Shilen match grade barrel blank and turns the necessary threads and O.D. to a finished product, a 11/16 bull barrel 6" in length.

"Ron will probably have a stroke when he sees what I've done to this one. I have slab-sided the barrel but in an unusual manner. The slabs have been cut on an angle for use on the barricade.

"When you slap the barrel against the barricade on the flat, the angle tips the scope away from the barricade and gives you a clear sight picture through the scope.



The shooter grasps the barrel with index and middle fingers while wrapping ring and pinky fingers around the Weigand "barricade lug." Fingers are also hooked around the edge of the barricade for maximum stability.

Quest, there is a rough hewn knight errant who sweats over his own forge tempering irons for the realm. Jack Weigand comes from the same country as Koenig and is one of the few pistolsmiths who is also an NRA Master Class competitor.

An example of the type of iron this smithy likes to shoot arrived in a battered

"Out on the front of the barrel is a Bianchi finger hook. Simply, this is used for a safety, so you don't put your fingers over the muzzle.

"The underlug serves two purposes. First, it serves as a guard for the extractor rod so it doesn't get bent or so you don't grab it during barricade shooting. Sec-





ondly, the lug in the front is meant to grab in front and pull it back into the barricade. These two parts along with the scope mount are made from aluminum 6063-T6 type and blue anodized."

Scope Mount

"The scope mount is, for the most part, designed with the barricade event in mind. The rearward mounting is for clearance over the barrel to accommodate for different shooting styles. The height is for a clearer sight picture.

"When the scope is mounted low on a Bianchi gun sometimes the finger hook and your knuckles are visible in the scope. This can be annoying.

"We use the Tasco DDP-2, the only dot scope choice as of this moment."

Custom Grips

"Guy Hogue custom made me these fantastic Flat Bottom Monogrips with prone shooting in mind. We all know if you can't shoot prone you don't have much of a chance to win Bianchi.

"This is one of the most elegant solutions to a problem I have seen in a while. Guy is quite the person. He has been a source of help and encouragement to me and I really appreciate it. They fit without modification!"

Thumb Latch

"Modified from a stock S&W thumb latch. Under the back of it you will notice a cut about a third of the way to the front. This is to prevent those annoying little scratches that a stock one will give you on the frame just below it. The underside is also relieved for speed loader clearance."

Cylinder

"Here is where Ron Power, my mentor, influenced me in my work. I chamfer my cylinders and bevel the extractor the cylinder locks up and stays locked up during firing."

Action Job

"I spend a great deal of time doing my action jobs. All bearing surfaces are honed and polished to remove as much friction as possible. I go so far as to change some of the angles to aid in smoother trigger return.

The trigger receives considerable attention both aesthetically and functionally. The front is smoothed and rounded for comfort.

"You will notice I don't drill the overtravel stop all the way through the trigger. Comfort again, every little bit counts!

"Also notice the back side of the trigger is radiused. If you happen to pinch yourself between the trigger and the frame, it probably won't break the skin.

"If you are familiar with the new style hand in the Smith's it's called a floating



The crane is locked to the frame with not one but <u>two</u> ball detent locks. Weigand says this aids in better accuracy, and obviously it's stronger.

hand. I take it out and toss it in the hopper. It's not a real asset to a competition pistol. S&W apparently redesigned it for liability reasons.

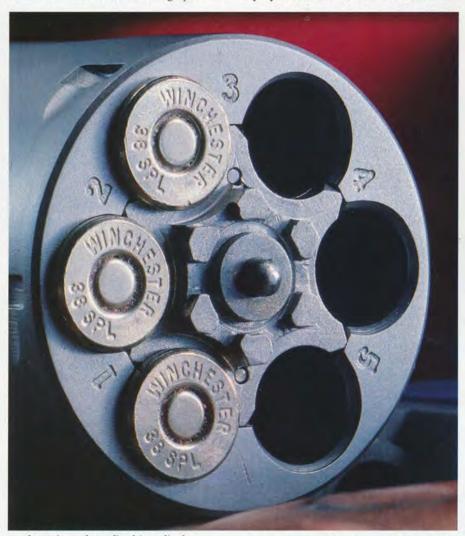
"Also I believe it's easier for them to have a pistol function in less time with the floating hand. I use the old style, fixed pin hands.

"You'll also notice the bobbed hammer. Another trick I learned from ol' Ron. His theory is that the hammer at the weight it is makes for quicker lock time. The balance between speed and weight allows less mainspring tension which equates to a lighter trigger pull. Sure makes sense and it looks trick too.

"I use Wolff power mainsprings. They seem to last forever."

Finish

"The finish for the most part is a light glass bead for no glare. There are some



Jack Weigand credits his cylinder work to his mentor Ron Power who showed Jack the tricks of chamfering the charge holes and bevelling the extractor. Jack also numbers his chambers, another Power characteristic.

way my hero does. Also, note the cylinder is numbered just like Ron's.

"The headspace is adjusted to minimum tolerance, end-shake adjusted to approximately .0005" and cylinder gap adjusted to .008". I use Power crane and cylinder shims to adjust all of that.

"You'll notice I use two ball locks. The reason I use two is I like the way the





The internal lockwork (above) of a Weigand custom revolver is thoroughly polished, honed and hand-fitted for an exceptionally smooth and crisp trigger action. The muzzle of Weigand wheelgun (left) shows the angled planes of the slabsided barrel. The slab-sides are angled to lay flat against the barricade when the revolver is canted slightly in a typical "barricade hold." All this is done to accommodate the Barricade Event of the Bianchi Cup match. For the Moving Target Event (below), our photographer Ichiro Nagata installed a custom Tasco ProPoint sight with three red dots. The center dot is for point-of-aim shots in all other events while the two outside dots are calibrated with the correct deflection for "leading" the Moving Target. The dots are calibrated for a specific bullet's velocity.



polished areas I feel are non-critical surfaces."

Timing

"You will notice the cylinder is fully locked up before the hammer falls. This is true of all the pistols we build.

"All pistols are checked for cylinder and barrel alignment before we will build a custom pistol on one. Sometimes you'll find a cylinder not bored correctly. I'd rather lose a sale than build a shitty gun."

My Influences

"Ed Brown was probably the first real influence on my pistolsmithing career. I had spoken to Ed numerous times about his parts and components and he mentioned if I ever ran into a problem to give him a call.

"Not too long after that I ran into a real stinker of a problem building my first 1911 10mm pistol. After a few conversations over this pistol, Ed said to ship him the pistol and he would check it out.

"Ended up the chamber was too tight and Ed fixed it. (Embarrassing, isn't it?)

"Ed returned the pistol with a list of suggested improvements in my methods of pistol building in a two page typed letter, along with a few sketches. How many guys would do that for a fledgling pistolsmith?

"Around that time Ed recommended me for the American Pistolsmith's Guild which I am proud to say admitted me."

Ron Power

"I first made contact with Ron during my pistol inspection for the Guild. To be accepted into the Guild you must build a revolver and a semi-auto for them to inspect. Ron inspected my pistols and gave me a call.

"He liked my work but felt I needed some spit and polish on my action jobs. After a few conversations he invited me to attend a class he was giving in Trinidad, Colo., at Trinidad State College. It turned out to be one of the best experiences in my pistolsmithing career.

"Ron is a fantastic instructor and you can get as much out of the course as you want.

"One night Ron invited me out for dinner with his son, Randall. We all ended up at the local Holiday Inn soaking in a hot tub most of the night. Ron gave me the history of the competition revolver (should be a book). We have become fast friends and without his help I don't believe I would be as far along in my career as I am.

"I guess I consider Ron my mentor also."

Background

"Believe it or not, most of my background comes from the wild and woolly world of short-track Stock Car racing. I

Continued on page 79

The AYOOB FILES

GUNSHOP HOLDUP: THE GREG FERRIS INCIDENT

Situation: An armed robbery Lesson: Hold your fire and goes down with innocent bystanders between you and the thieves.

feign compliance until you get a clear shot. Then kill the bastard.

On the morning of Wednesday, February 15, 1987, customer traffic was medium-light at Ferris Firearms, 1827 West Hildebrand Avenue, San Antonio, Texas. But it was about to become a more exciting than average business day.

Outside, two men were planning to hold up the store. Tracy Cobbs and Paul Valadez, though both only 20, were both budding career criminals. Their records paralleled one another's, for two reasons. First, they generally committed their crimes together. Second, they were not terribly good at it.

Three weeks before, they had been arrested for auto theft, and someone in the system reportedly had cut a deal with them, setting aside the charges in return for their agreement to become informers. Overlooked had been the allegation that at the time of their last arrest, they'd said they would next time either outrun or outfight their opposition.

With their usual good sense, equalled only by their good citizenship, they were about to rob a gunshop. Tracy Cobbs unrolled his home-made ski mask. Street Reality was about to teach him a lesson the Criminal Justice System had failed to bring home.

Gregory Ferris, owner of the shop, was standing at the counter showing a couple of handguns to Lewis Harrell, 61, a regular customer. Ferris saw two men walk through the door. The first was a young Latino man carrying a blue gym bag. Behind him was the second man. Ferris saw what looked like a baby blue sweatshirt cut up to form a ski mask, over the man's face. He knew instantly.

But he could not react. In the masked man's hand was a blue .380 automatic, levelled straight at him. Going for his own gun against a drawn pistol, Ferris knew, would trigger a gunfight that could get the customer standing in the middle killed.

"Get away from the counter and off to the side," barked the man with the gun, Tracy Cobbs. Ferris obeyed.

Paul Valadez jumped behind the counter. He snatched up the gun Ferris was thinking of going for, a loaded Smith & Wesson Model 64 .38 Special. The stainless revolver with black neoprene grips had been stashed behind the counter. Ferris was now facing two armed robbers.

Valadez began shoving guns into the gym bag. Two dozen guns were rapidly shoved into the capacious canvas bag: S&W and Colt and Taurus and Ruger, mostly .38's and .357's but some .45's, .44 Magnums, and .22's, and a .380 and a couple of 9mm's.

Bill McGuire, carrying two open shotguns he wanted Ferris to look at, walked through the door. The robbers instantly took him under the gun and disarmed him. Ferris, Harrell, and McGuire were all ordered face down on the floor. They had no choice but to obey. They were relieved of their wallets.

Ferris knew it was getting bad. He feared that being proned out on the floor would be a prelude to being executed with a bullet in the back of the head.

The masked man, Cobbs, snapped, "You got any Uzis?"

Ferris replied that he sold only handguns, not assault weapons or submachineguns. Cobbs accepted the statement. He had not noticed his partner Valadez stuffing a 9mm semiautomatic MAC-10 into the gym bag.

Cobbs asked, "You got any handcuffs?" Ferris replied that they were in the west room, where police accessories were kept, off the main showroom.

"Go get 'em." Cobbs snapped to Valadez, and the second robber obeyed.

Time To Fight Back

Ferris could not see the second man, but he could hear the sounds of handcuffs being picked up. The first, masked robber moved to a position where he could monitor both his partner in the next room, and the three victims on the floor. He glanced down at Ferris.

"Quit looking at me! Put your face to the floor!"

Ferris appeared to meekly obey. Face down, he still watched the gunman out of the corner of his eye. He saw the masked man step into the next room.

For a moment, he was out of sight of the robbers. He perceived it to be his last chance to regain control of his own destiny, and of the safety of the two customers he felt responsible for.

Greg Ferris sprang to his feet and darted to the hallway, toward the loaded Remington 870 shotgun the robbers had not yet discovered.

Ferris rips the 870 from the wall rack. Its extended Choate magazine and its chamber are loaded with standard Winchester 12-gauge Express shells. The first two rounds up are 00 buckshot, followed by a candy-cane load of slug, buck, slug,

buck, slug, buck. With the gun in a combat position, Ferris lunges back into the showroom area, the area with two proned-out victims he has to protect.

The masked man is just coming back into the room. As he passes the display of reloading equipment he sees his erstwhile victim, the Remington pump in his hand. Tracy Cobbs raises his .380, aims it at Ferris.

The gun dealer fires.

Instinct has told the robber to take cover. It works. At the blast of the shotgun, it appears to Ferris that the gunman has merely ducked. Cobbs jumps behind the door, yelling something Ferris can't make out.

Firefight Erupts

For the only time in his life, Ferris will regret the ruggedness of one of his favorite products, the Dillon reloading press. A Square Deal Dillon set on the display table has absorbed the charge of buckshot. Two of the nine .33 caliber pellets have caromed off the press and ricocheted into Cobbs' right arm, their force

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largely spent. The wounds are not severe, and Tracy Cobbs is not incapacitated in the least.

Ferris has pumped the next buckshot shell into the chamber. He yells at his customers to stay safely on the floor. There are no guns of his own left to give them, and he knows that Texas laws prohibit his customers from carrying their as fast as the competition double taps he has executed so many times, Ferris unleashes his next round.

The third time is a charm.

The Winchester rifled slug smashes into Cobbs' left forearm, pulverizing some four inches of bone. Barely slowed from its 1,400 feet per second starting velocity, the .72 caliber projectile exits

In a strategically placed mirror, he sees the second robber obey, lowering himself face down in the next room.

Ferris calls out to the rescued customers to call the police. McGuire dials 911 and Harrell rushes to Ferris' side. Harrell picks up the handcuffs Valadez has dropped and manacles the robber's hands behind his back. Moving the .380 away from the blood-soaked man on the floor, the citizen cuffs Cobbs' lesswounded right hand to his belt.

The police response was swift. Even before the ambulance had arrived, Paul Valadez and Tracy Cobbs were under arrest for Aggravated Robbery.

The Winchester rifled slug smashes into Cobbs' left forearm, pulverizing some four inches of bone.

own concealed weapons. He is the only armed man there to deal with the twoagainst-one danger.

Moving tactically, Ferris advances, edging out to where he can see around the door. Suddenly, the man with the .380 leans out and levels his blue pistol at Ferris again.

Ferris fires.

The charge of buckshot catches Cobbs in the lower abdomen, on a raking angle. The pellets tear through soft tissue, and exit, lodging safely in a door behind the armed robber.

And Cobbs is still up, still ready to shoot.

The followup is instantaneous. Almost

the arm and re-enters the gunman's side behind the lateral midline. A fragment of the slug cuts through the top of the left kidney and then the main body of the lead mass impacts the spine, shattering the vertebra and severing the spinal cord.

The gunman's pistol, an Italian Tanfoglio GT loaded with full metal jacket .380 ball ammunition, clatters to the floor. Tracy Cobbs falls heavily beside it. He is still conscious... but he is no longer in a fighting mood.

Ferris has lost sight of the second robber, Valadez, last seen with a loaded .38 Special in hand. He yells out to the surviving gunman to surrender, to lay on the floor. He repeats the command.

Followup

Paul Valadez was sentenced to 10 years in the Texas State Penitentiary system for the robbery of Ferris Firearms. Tracy D. Cobbs was placed on 10 years probation upon his plea of guilty 10 days after his accomplice's sentencing.

The judge pitied him and felt that what had been done to him by Ferris' gunfire was punishment enough. It was, at least, a punishment from which there would be

no parole, no probation.

Cobbs recovered uneventfully from the injuries inflicted by the 11 buckshot pellets that struck him. The rifled slug, however, had interdicted the central nervous system and left him paralyzed for life from that point down.



The same slug had so massively shattered the left forearm that he would never again have full use of that limb. If he intends to continue his career of violent crime, it will have to be as a paraplegic one-armed robber.

Greg Ferris was well-treated by the criminal justice system. Advised by Cobbs' civil attorney to forward all information on his insurance and to make an offer to settle for the terrible injuries suffered by his client in the "accident" in the gunshop, Ferris hired his own attorney to tell the shyster in no uncertain terms that there would not be a penny forthcoming. The matter "went away."

Lessons

Would a loaded pistol on the belt have better served Greg Ferris at the opening moments of the encounter? That's highly unlikely. Ferris is a skilled match shooter and "action" pistolero— I first met him some years before the shooting when we were both competing at the Bianchi Cup.

But the Bianchi Cup does not start with a loaded gun pointed at the contestant, and with an innocent bystander in between. Even with a holstered pistol, Ferris would have been wise to do just what he did: cooperate until an opportuni-

ty presented itself.

Note that once the victims seemed submissively cowed into surrender, the attention of the criminals lapsed, and an opening presented itself. This is something we see again and again in situations of this type. As soon as the Bad Guy perceives the Good Guy to have surrendered, the Bad Guy's attentions stray elsewhere.

(Warning: the same phenomenon in reverse gets the Good Guys killed when homicidal felons initially surrender and lull them into a false sense of security. Notice that Ferris, with another round of 00 buck in the chamber, diligently guarded the wounded and surrendered suspects until police arrived, and made good use of the bystanders to secure the hands of Cobbs and Valadez.)

We notice that bad guys can take advantage of cover, too. Had Cobbs not fortuitously or reflexively put that Square Deal press between himself and the muzzle of Ferris' Remington 870, the gun dealer's first charge of buckshot might have killed the robber outright.

Throughout the gunfight, Cobbs took advantage of cover. However, rifled slugs

reach through walls easily.

Most experts suggest that the shotgun be loaded with the same kind of ammo throughout, so if you lose count of your shots you know what's going to be coming out of your gun the next time you pull the trigger.

However, for Greg Ferris, the staggered loading made sense. Says Greg, "I alternated my ammunition because I figured that most likely my first two shots would be used in a direct encounter but that thereafter I might be shooting at or For High-Performance Handgun Bullets, Sierra is...

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through cover. This was almost the exact sequence I was confronted with during the incident."

Consider the effect of the first two buckshot rounds. Some, who only saw the newspaper version of this story, erroneously perceived that Tracy Cobbs was some superhuman golem who had taken two full blasts of 00 buck *and* a rifled slug, and dropped his gun only because his arm was broken.

The facts of the matter are that, intentionally or otherwise, Cobbs had the advantage of cover when the first shot was fired, becoming perhaps the only "satisfied Dillon customer" that Dillon Reloading *isn't* proud of. The two ricocheting pellets produced only insignificant injuries, and that was hardly Ferris' fault.

The second blast hit on a raking angle. None of the pellets that perforated Cobbs' abdomen struck anything that he immediately needed to stay up and running and threatening. It was the location and angle of the third and final hit, even more than the crushing power of the 12-bore slug, that brought the deadly encounter to its conclusion.

Jeff Cooper wrote Ferris, "The point I note is the need to fire a shotgun with great precision at short range, rather than to rely upon the spread of its shot pattern. We teach that here in school and your first-hand experience is useful to us as an illustration."

Cooper continued, "The legal notion that you might be harassed or even punished for successfully repelling boarders is one of the bad jokes of the present day. It seems rather too bad that you did not center your pattern precisely."

In that last comment, many readers will find much to agree with.

UNDERCOVER

Continued from page 44

sion in your own specifications.

Neighbor (by western standards) Milt Sparks can be reached through Box 187, Idaho City, ID 83631.

Kramer IWB #1

Speaking of neighbors in the holster business, I have had the immense good fortune to meet over a local gun show table, one Greg Kramer. Greg is an unassuming and soft spoken fellow who has designed some very new and well thought-out holsters.

What Greg came up with was the Inside-the-Waistband #1. It wouldn't be a secret if I told you that while I appreciate the concealment value of a gun being inside the waistband, I find them uncomfortable when worn 12 to 16 hours straight. Not so with Greg's design.

One of the nice features of the IWB #1

is its ability to be removed enblock-that is, gun and all- and reattached to your belt in seconds. This is accomplished by using snap-fastened leather loops for attachment to the belt. It also makes dropping your pants and going to the john a lot less frustrating.

I think the comfort of the IWB #1 rests in the fact that it is both thin and wide. Dang, when you strap this sucker

on it almost feels good!

As further illustration of Greg Kramer's brilliance, he has designed belt rigs for females in local law enforcement that actually utilize the shapely female contours as an advantage in positioning the holster for extended wear with uppermost comfort.

This is no mean task. One such rig, designed for an exceptionally contoured lass, he named after her. He calls it the Kelly Special. Nice touch!

Greg can be reached at Pro Line Leather, P.O. Box 112154, Tacoma, WA 98411. He has a catalog, but should be helped with postage.

Cobra Com-Vest

There will always be those who prefer a shoulder holster when packing a concealed pistol. It should come as no surprise that it is nigh impossible to conceal a .45 autoloader in a shoulder rig under a suitcoat. You can come close by utilizing smallish .45s such as the Colt Officers ACP and the new S&W snub .45 auto.

Acknowledging this, I will recommend what I consider to be the best shoulder holster for .45 autoloaders available- and it has been around for quite some time. The rig is the Cobra Com-Vest which I have worn off and on for years.

The Com-Vest (not actually a vest) presents the gun horizontally and, safety snap notwithstanding, offers an incredibly fast draw. Cobra Gunskin offers the rig as one of their best law enforcement sellers.

While I have not had room in this article to detail the materials and construction of the holsters mentioned, let me hasten to assure you that each manufacturer offers the finest quality available that will, at the least, outlive a normal gun toting career.

HANDLOADING

Continued from page 26

case life is much larger than the eye can

This centering procedure is especially important in aligning the decapping pin because an ill-aligned decapping pin will mar and rub the flash hole of the case as it enters the primer pocket through the flash hole to decap the fired primer.

This can result in an enlarged or elongated flash hole when a symmetric and consistent diameter flash hole is a critical element in uniform ignition of the metallic cartridge.

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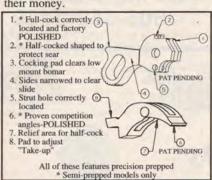
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In fact, Neal Knox thinks much of the early success of the PPC rounds developed by Ferris and Palmisano owed some of the credit to the "metering" affect of their drilled flash holes.

Those first .220 Russian cases were delivered without flash holes and each case, in turn, had to have the flash hole drilled. These drilled flash holes were precision drilled on center and consistent from case to case.

The advantage was that a large flash hole will magnify the differences seen in primers, even those from the same manufacturer's lot, because of the natural variations seen in even the best quality primers. But a metered flash hole tends to reduce the differences between primers and establish a more consistent flame to the powder.

The problem, of course, is these primer differences are seldom seen in ordinary guns, but bench rest rifles will demonstrate them easily.

A Caliber Question

Neal brought out one other point that is important to handgun reloaders. Everything Ferris said about wall thickness in rifle bullets was absolutely true, but the importance of a properly constructed bullet becomes less significant as the bore diameter increases.

For instance, if you disturb the outside .001" of a .22 bullet, the area affected is

almost 5% of the bullet, but if you disturb the outside .001" of a .45 bullet, what is that percentage in relation to the area of the .45 bullet?

The resulting percentage is much smaller and other factors take on greater importance in terms of influencing accuracy in large caliber handguns, but because of that very fact it is easier to find loads that shoot well in the larger calibers than it is in comparable smaller calibers.

Larger caliber handguns by virtue of their size negate the importance of perfectly constructed bullets and allows most of us to enjoy accuracy with our big bore handloads that we can't find with our smaller caliber handguns.

Neal emphasized he didn't get better accuracy from his .44's, but he did find more loads that would shoot as well and they were easier to develop than he ever did for his .357 Magnum's, and he figures the ratio ran about 4 to 1 in favor of the larger .44 versus the smaller .357.

Neal went on to point out the importance of segregating your empty brass by headstamp, and even by the various lots from the same manufacturer— again the reason is concentricity. Trying to keep everything centered and squared.

Which is what the bench rest shooters are doing when they go through a gun and make sure everything is either parallel, horizontal, square or at a 90° angle to

the thrust of the projectile. They will even square up the heads of the cartridge case to make sure they are square and at a 90° angle to the force from the projectile.

The benchrest boys go to extreme lengths to make sure everything is running true and straight, even down to making sure the firing pin is on-center. Which brings us to our last point, and one that may seem a little odd to be found in a column on reloading.

Firing Pin Finesse

Because of the natural variation found in the different primers made for reloaders, Ferris feels one area of the firearm that needs attention is the firing pin and most importantly, the shape of the firing pin tip as opposed to the amount of firing pin protrusion.

For instance, on a firing pin of .080" diameter he feels the ideal radius is not .040", but .050" with the resulting flattened radius. He wants a radius on the firing pin tip that does not come tangent with the diameter and thus gives a bigger surface area.

This results in the pin striking the primer with an effectively bigger hammer and, in his opinion, gives better ignition of the cartridge.

But the important lesson from the benchrest boys is the concept of concentricity. Making sure everything is in line and straight, and handgun reloaders can



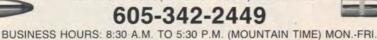
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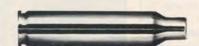


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help improve the concentricity of their ammunition by just watching and paying careful attention to the adjustment of their reloading dies during installation.

Historically, ammunition has been the least critical element in obtaining acceptable accuracy from a handgun. It has played a greater role in rifles, because in most cases if enough time is invested a load can be discovered that will yield good accuracy in most any rifle.

That usually isn't true in handguns, and that says more about the general condition of the gun in question than anything else because like Neal Knox said, "A good rifle will shoot any load well, but a bad rifle won't.'

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FAST VIDEO

DA-ONLY PIST

Continued from page 49

The manual of arms for this new weapon is simple: insert a loaded magazine, cycle the slide, and you're ready for duty. There are no external safeties. The slide lock and magazine release button are there and work exactly like their DA counterparts.

My test piece is equipped with the Novak rear sight, adjustable for windage only. Elevation changes can be effected by replacing the dove-tailed front sight.

This three-dot system is very good, although I feel that the front blade is a bit too thick, not allowing enough light on either side during a flash sight picture.

The sloping contours of the Novak sight make for almost snag-free carry, while still giving enough height for a good sight picture. The sight's only drawback is that it makes one-hand malfunction clearance techniques a very dicey proposition.

DA-Only 9mm

How do they shoot? No malfunctions were noted with either pistol. Over 500 rounds were put through the 6946. Felt recoil and muzzle flip were indistinguishable from the standard DA guns.

Winchester Q4217 147gr. sub-sonic was used exclusively.

(A word about this ammunition is in order. All criticism of the "sub-caliber" aside, this load really does get the 9mm up off its knees. The "experts" like to talk about energy dump, foot-pounds at the muzzle, and so forth. Eye wash. Performance in the field is what counts. The two dozen or so incidents that I am familiar with where this round has been used by the cops show that it gets the job done, and that's what we're talking about here.)

Interestingly enough, with the exception of a handload using Hornady's 124 gr. truncated flat-point, the W-W 147gr. sub-sonic is the most accurate 9mm ammunition I have ever tried. From the

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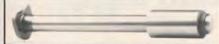
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Training Is The Key

The key to the whole equation is training. Bureaucrats are loath to spend Continued on page 76

prone position at 50 yards, I can hold four-inch groups out of my SIG P226 all day long.

As noted, these new S&W pistols are intended for service, not target, use. Their practical accuracy is very satisfactory.

Testing was done from the seven yard line unsupported standing position and the 25 yard barricade-supported standing position. Groups averaged 4" and 7 respectively, with the 25 yard group going high and right. The guns will do their part if the shooter does his.

Only enough formal accuracy testing was done to ensure that the guns would hold a group. Most of my shooting was done from the leather at steel reaction targetseight inch plates and Pepper poppers.

I did extensive speed double-taps and multiple target drills. The DA-only concept can be mastered after a fashion, but it seriously reduces the accuracy potential for the second and subsequent shots in the semi-auto pistol.

A Matter Of Triggers

Most folks assume that the recent surge of interest in semi-autos for police is because of their high magazine capacity. While true, this is neither the only nor the most important reason.

The short, crisp three to five pound break of a single-action trigger is, given a shooter under stress, more conducive to accuracy than the long 12 to 15 pound stroke of a double-action revolver.

True, that stroke is present on the first round with a DA auto. But the DA-to-SA transition is not as difficult to master as some "experts" would have you believe.

At any rate, the DA-only concept gives you the worst of both worlds. It requires a great degree of concentration on the part of the shooter and can no way equal the speed and smoothness of a good SA trigger.

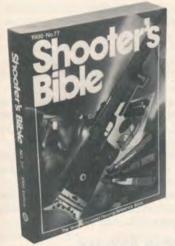
On more than one occasion, I found myself "milking" the trigger and pulling my shots low. This is where the increased tension at the end of the 6946's DA-only trigger manifests itself. In a word, it is difficult to control.

So why build this thing in the first place? The DA revolver has a long, proven track record. The SA auto, in the hands of a competent, well-trained man, has had good success.

The DA auto, while relatively new to the police scene, has shown that it is equal- and in some ways superiorwith proper training.

Every other agency that I have talked with echoes the same thing we found: after a proper transition course, switching to the DA 9mm auto caused overall average qualification scores to go up, drastically so in some cases.

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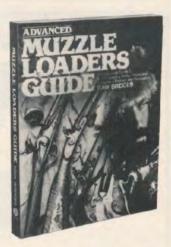
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We have recently learned of a broken firing pin in a P85 automatic pistol which caused the pistol to fire as a result of decocking. This is the first report of this nature in over 200,000 pistols delivered to customers since 1987. No injury occurred because the shooter kept the pistol pointed in a safe direction during decocking.

Nevertheless, we regard this incident as important because it reveals a potential danger which we are prepared to eliminate in all P85 pistols now in use. This modification is very simple and does not alter the handling or appearance of this pistol, but it must be installed at the factory.

Accordingly, we urgently request that all owners of P85 pistols contact us immediately to obtain any further information they may desire, and to arrange for return of their P85 pistols to the factory for modification. Please contact us at:

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Or call us for P85 inquiries only at: 1-800-424-1886. Please have your pistol serial number available when contacting us.

We will schedule your gun for factory installation of a new safety/decock system free of charge. It will prevent this type of accidental firing even in the rare event of firing pin breakage.

This free safety modification applies only to pistols rollmarked "P85" on the slide. Pistols which are rollmarked "MKII" will have these modifications as part of their original manufacture, and are not subject to this modification.

We are also taking this opportunity to remind shooters of the most common and basic firearms safety rule:

ALWAYS KEEP THE PISTOL POINTED IN A SAFE DIRECTION!

This is particularly important when loading, unloading, or decocking any pistol. Entire contents © 1990 by Sturm, Ruger & Company





Continued from page 74

money on intangibles such as training.

Consider the tack taken by a prominent west coast agency 12 or so years ago. This department mandated removal of the single-action capability on all their duty revolvers.

As is usually the case, their problem was personnel, not equipment related. In typical bureaucratic fashion, they gelded the weapon rather than train their people properly. This "solution" did not substantially reduce their accidental discharge rate.

The same agency, on the other hand, has had good luck with their 9mm program. Why? Because they put their troops through an intensive transition school!

Weapon handling, like any other motor skill, is learned through repetitive training. You have to literally burn the knowledge into the student's brain.

Double-action to single-action trigger control transition and decocking after a string of rounds are the cornerstones of effective, safe DA auto employment. The techniques are not at all difficult to learn, but they take time and money.

Training Bypass

These new S&W pistols are an attempt to by-pass that training requirement. I have heard more than one administrator say that these new guns are 15shot revolvers. Not so, by any stretch of the imagination.

The brain surgeon who thought up this concept is no doubt quite proud of himself. He can boast about providing his troops with the latest in defensive weaponry, the better to protect his men and the citizenry, while at the same time secure in the knowledge that he won't have to allocate any additional training funds.

Well, I've got news for him. There are many, many ill-trained cops out there who really have no idea how the gun they wear every day works or how to properly

Such people won't be better marksmen or more safety-conscious with a DAonly auto. They will just have more rounds.

Accidental Discharges

I keep mentioning safety, and with good cause. One reason the DA revolver has been so long-lived in police work is that you can take a widely disparate group of people (such as a recruit class) and bring them to a given level of competency with a minimum amount of time and ammunition.

Another is that the weapon is less prone to accidental discharge in the hands of a duffer. This is not speculation; it is fact.

A conscious effort is required to pull that 12 to 15 pound trigger through. Of the dozen or so SA auto accidental discharges I have personal knowledge of, all but one occurred because, for one reason or another, the safety had been inadvertently bumped off.

I will not argue that the Colt 1911 is the finest fighting pistol we have ever seen, or are likely to see.

In combat, accidental discharges are of little consequence. In police work, they can be (and are) ruinous.

I have two friends, both extremely competent IPSC competitors and most excellent police officers, who have had accidental discharges "in the heat of action."

One was lucky. The other has lost his job and is in the process of losing everything else of value he owns.

This is what the .45 gurus cannot seem to grasp. They are quick to say that familiarity with the weapon, proper mindset, and plain old common sense will preclude an accidental discharge. What they really mean is that it hasn't happened to them yet.

Time tends to change one's perspective. When I came on the job, lo these many years ago, I was perturbed that I could not carry my Pachmayr Special on duty. Now, I would not carry it if ordered to.

I saw the marvelous old Colt perform twice during my all-expense-paid trip to exotic lands, and it was superb.

However, my resolve remains firm. In the hands of an average cop, the SA auto is an accidental discharge looking for a place to happen.

In my opinion, for police use, the DA auto is the best compromise, It allows greater continuity of fire, is easier to shoot well than a full-house magnum revolver, and has that DA trigger as a safety fudge.

The DA-only auto, as exemplified by these two new S&Ws, is safe enough and has the magazine capacity, but is just plain difficult to control in rapid-fire work.

Design By Committee

It is my understanding that S&W built these guns upon request of a major agency. I can well believe it, for these weapons seem to have been put together by committee.

For instance, instead of creating a new slide forging, the factory simply plugged the hole left by the safety/decock lever.

Functional? No doubt. Aesthetically pleasing? Hardly.

This lack of attention to detail is also featured on the Model 1076, the FBI's new wondergun. A minor complaint, to be sure, but one wonders what other shortcuts were taken.

And there can be no excuse for that deplorable trigger pull. S&W builds the finest DA revolver in the world. I'm no engineer, but it seems to me that a little more effort at the drafting table would have yielded better results.

The computer-enhanced design





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parameters supposedly employed on the Third Generation S&W autos was definitely not used here. The difference in the DA stroke on a 5906 and a 5946 is startling.

However, the gun will sell because there are people who want it. A master gunsmith once told me that he would put a barrel on a motor scooter if that was what the customer asked for.

Beretta has just introduced the model 92D, a DA-only version of the 92F. SIG does not advertise it, nor are they comfortable with people knowing it, but the fact is that they will produce a DA-only P226 for department special orders. Business, I suppose, is business.

An oft-quoted cliche seems to apply to the DA-only concept in spades: "An answer in search of a question."

FORUM

Continued from page 37

solve, like recoil. Compensators probably solved about 40% of the problem, and little bullets like 135 gr. .38 Supers solved maybe another 40%. Perhaps some type of miniaturized gyro device for the remaining 20%?

Next, capacity. Innovative follower devices gave another round to the old Gov't model, but with 20+ shot offensive oriented "practical" (G-Factor) courses of fire becoming the norm, the trend is moving toward 18+ shot 9x21's.

These are really 9mm Lugers, but don't tell anyone because 9mm Luger isn't legal in IPSC major scoring factor. Whatever 9x21 is or isn't, it is definitely gameyand that's what wins big matches!

In 1991, a great trigger pull isn't enough, we have to reduce the lock time by over 50% (the time from the trigger tripping the sear until the firing pin hits the primer). It is done by making the hammer, strut, and firing pin out of titanium.

This means when you anticipate the recoil of the pistol (a nice way to say flinch) you can only pull the shot half as far off the intended point of aim. This is really big Mo-Jo if you flinch as bad as I do sometimes when shooting under the pressure of a Big Match.

When I set the fastest pace in the 1982 Bianchi Cup shoot-off with an Aimpoint electronic sight, I figured it was just a matter of time before electronic sights became gamey. It took awhile, but with improved technology and "practical" (G-Factor) courses of fire which incorporate 25 yard head shots surrounded by noshoots, the handwriting is on the wall.

The '90 Nationals and IPSC World Shoot were won with electronic sights. Get ready for the tidal wave.

What does the future have in store? I've got stuff on the drawing board that might make B-2's look boring to an IPSC pistolero. Judging by the technological leaps made in the Eighties, rail-guns shooting laser guided 10 gr. projectiles at 17,500 fps would not really be all that shocking... just a little gamey!

Chip McCormick is the only two-time winner of the Steel Challenge. The native Texan has represented the United States in international competition as a member of the 1983 IPSC Silver Team and the 1988 IPSC Gold Team. Today Chip continues to contribute to the sport with innovative new products through his CMC company. More importantly, he's never too busy or wrapped up in his shooting to share his enthusiasm and experience with beginners at matches both local and nationwide. His friendly and eager willingness to help other shooters makes Chip McCormick a true champion. Editor.

Continued from page 65

drove stock cars from the age of 15 to about 26. I figured if I was to make 27, I should find a new vocation. (More balls than brains— 'crash or win' attitude.)

"After I quit driving, I did a short stint of crew chiefing for the likes of Brett Bodine, John Oats (of Hall and Oats) and worked a little on John and Mike Andretti's cars during their Formula Ford days.

"One place I have gained a great deal of knowledge is from looking over other gunsmiths' work. I've been fortunate enough to have about everyone's work come through my shop for one reason or another. If I see someone else doing something better than I am, I have no qualms about changing my ways. I look at it like evolution: adapt or prepare to be extinct.

"Like I said in our discussion about Master Pistolsmiths, I do not consider myself a master, at least not yet. A master is by definition 'a person recognized as having achieved the highest degree of skill.' Quite a bill to fill.

"I feel in some areas I may qualify as a master but certainly at my age I'm lacking in others. Please don't get me wrong. I feel my work is right up there but certainly not a true master's. A master must be able to do it all. I don't believe there are more than a handful of true master pistolsmiths in the world.

"One thing I believe I do have over many pistolsmiths, is my extensive competition shooting experience. I've won in excess of 150 local and state IPSC, NRA Action and bullseye matches. For the past two years I have been traveling what is loosely defined as the Professional Pistol Shooting Circuit. The likes of the Steel Challenge, Bianchi, the Masters and such.

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invaluable in this trade. Being able to relate to customers' problems and input is probably my strongest point.

"A lot of my gizmos have come in the form of customer's suggestions or ideas. I try not to pooh-pooh customers or fellow shooters' ideas too easily. I hate getting 'I told you so's!"

Test Firing

The same day the UPS man dropped off the box with the WBT in it, there was another small, heavy box full of .38 Special reloads. The red and white Hornady label inside one of the blue plastic Dillon cartridge boxes said, ".38 Special, Federal 100 primer, 6.5 grains W231 powder and Hornady 125 grain JHP-XTP bullet."

That load, sure as fire and brimstone, ain't in the Third Edition of the *Hornady Handbook of Cartridge Reloading*. Listed under .38 Special on page 341, Hornady indicates that the maximum load is 5.6 grains of W231 producing a velocity of 1,000 fps out of a four-inch S&W Model 15 barrel and they asterisk the load so you will known that it is +P.

Out of the Shilen six-inch barrel on the WBT and across the skyscreens 10 feet from the muzzle hooked up to an Oehler 35P chronograph, the ammo scorched 1,216 fps with a standard deviation of 24 fps. Okay, so the load may not be a short .357 Magnum, but it comes awfully close. It sure as hell has to be a +P+ load.

I called Weigand to ask him where he got that load. He didn't remember exactly, but it might have been a recipe from Koenig. Now for all you Yahoos who thought Bianchi Cuppers were wimps, Weigand's pet load calculates out to an IPSC power factor of 152 which is right in the middle of that crazy three tier factoring system they are playing with.

While it is as warm a load as the cocktail sauce they pour down those firebreathing go-karts that Weigand used to jockey around oval tracks, in all fairness it is probably just as safe.

Weigand used to drive and wrench custom cars and now he shoots and builds custom guns. His choice of chassis to race with the hot ammo is not the antiquated K-frame, but the magnum Lframe.

The Smith & Wesson L-frame was designed to take a steady diet of magnum ammo. There is little or no question in my mind that his custom gun will handle his custom ammo. However, no reasonable person should consider using such a custom handload in any other gun than the one it was designed for.

Shooting the WBT both double-action and single-action out of a Ransom Rest at 25 yards I was able to get sub-one-inch, six-shot groups with the custom ammo. Shooting the gun off a bench rest at 25 yards I once again had to endure the humbling experience of the machine rest. It beat me by an eighth of an inch.

Switching to the Bianchi Cup course of fire, I shot the WBT on all four events, the Plates, the Practical, the Barricade and the Mover. The gun seemed a little light compared to what I was used to and I wondered why it did not have a compensator to take advantage of all those feet per second Weigand's ammo was churning up.

So I called again and asked him about it. Here's what he had to say.

Weigand Speaks Out

JW: What I like basically is an uncomped revolver on the light side. There are different schools of thought. Take Dougie Koenig for instance, he likes an uncomped revolver but on the heavy side with a 1.250" diameter barrel versus the 1.062" barrel. And he doesn't use an underlug underneath it.

What we did with the WBT barrel on the angles lightens the barrel considerably, even using a bull barrel. Then we put the aluminum underlug on it. The aluminum underlug can be changed to steel, and also the other components, the scope mount, the finger hook on the front can be made steel for additional weight also.

HL: Why do you like a light revolver?

JW: For maneuverability, basically. I don't have any stability problems while cycling the gun, and I think that's probably why most of the guys have heavier guns— to keep it stable while you're cycling your double action.

And I don't seem to have any problem with the lighter gun. I just like drawing a little bit lighter gun and being able to move from target to target on the Plates or following the Mover or whatever. But that's all completely personal preference.

HL: What about the trade-off on the lighter gun versus the heavier, for instance, the difference between bounce in the dot in recoil? In shooting the WBT the dot will flip out of the scope, where with a heavier gun it tends to stay in the scope. Do you have any feeling about the muzzle flip or recoil when you're shooting?

JW: Well, as far as shooting I kind of follow the theory that Robbie (Leatham) and Dougie do, and also Brian (Enos). Brian refers to it in his book quite a bit. And it's that we're not trying to control muzzle flip.

Basically you're cycling the gun, you let the muzzle flip and the gun will pop right down exactly where it was when you fired the shot. Rather than trying to muscle the gun or using weight or whatever to keep the muzzle from popping up and down. And that's basically how I shoot, the same way.

Where if you're holding the gun lightly and not a deathgrip on it, and you cycle it, when you fire the shot it pops up and pops right back down. The dot will come right back to where it was when you fired the first shot if you don't input anything while you're holding the gun during the shot.

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HL: What about compensators?

JW: Well, now the load that we sent you was a lighter jacketed bullet with more powder, considerably more powder than, say, a 158 grain bullet. There we're starting to get into enough pressure to make a compensator start to work.

But what we've had a problem with in the past is, you do a comp on a revolver for somebody and they come back and they don't feel like it's working at all, that it's not as efficient as it should be.

People tend to expect way too much from a comp in a revolver shooting minor type loads. So there is definitely a difference but it's not a tremendous difference. We just offer it as an option on the gun.

I don't necessarily believe it's imperative to have a compensator. Dougie doesn't like it but other shooters do. It just depends on your style and what you believe works and doesn't work.

HJ: Well, like you said, there is quite a difference in the philosophies on the equipment and shooting styles at the Bianchi Cup.

JW: Oh yeah. With 250 competitors, there's probably 200 different guns. Quite a different bunch of theories there. I guess I need to point out that if somebody does desire a heavier gun, the WBT can be done like that—it's no big deal.

And if they really want a comp, they can have that too. What we can do—what I've been thinking about lately—is the barrel that's on that gun is 11/16" barrel, and we've just been working with Dougie's gun with a 11/4" barrel, which adds quite a bit of weight. We may basically do the same thing that was done to that gun with just a larger barrel for someone who wants a heavier setup.

The gun would virtually look the same, it would just be a a bigger diameter barrel which would add some weight to it.

HL: So they could go to the 11/4" barrel with that treatment and go to the metal underlug, metal finger-stop on top of the barrel, and metal scope mount.

JW: Yeah, we could go that far if someone really wanted that much heavier gun. We basically do everything on a custom basis anyway, within reason. We try not to veer too far from our standard package because we only like to sell things that we have proven to work.

HL: You mentioned putting a heavier barrel on Doug Koenig's gun. Is he going to use the same gun that he won Bianchi with last year? That's a pretty historic gun. It was built by Frank Glenn and Rob Leatham used it to win the Bianchi Cup.

JW: We completely rebuilt that gun for Doug. He just came and got it. We did some pretty neat shit to it. We rebarreled it with a 9mm barrel instead of a .38 Special barrel. It was .3554" diameter so he can shoot the lighter jacketed bullets out of it, the .38 Super bullets. That was pretty tricky!

We thought that was pretty sharp. And we redid the action on that one, but we're building him another L-frame and right now he's planning on shooting the K-frame that he has from Robbie. But we should have the L-frame to him in about a month and he'll decide which gun he's going to shoot then.

HL: Does it have the angle cuts on it or not?

JW: No, no, he likes the solid bull barrel. Doug is kind of afraid to change anything at this point. He figures he cleaned it with that style gun, he'd like to stay with that style gun.

So he wants to stick with basically the same configuration. But what I would like to do is get him switched up to an L-frame and he could shoot the much lighter bullets then. The K-frame just won't take it.

HL: And shooting what, the 110 grain bullets?

JW: Yeah, I would think from 90 to 110, depending on what's happening. He's probably also going to give the comp a try. We may do a Ron Power style screw-on comp, and if he doesn't like it we can just take it off. But it would be an option anyway.

HL: A comp is available on your WBT gun? Is that a screw-on comp, or is that a machined-in comp with the barrel?

JW: We can do it either way. We can machine it integral right in the barrel or



we can make it a screw-on. A lot of guys don't like the longer gun so we offer an integral comp in the 6-inch barrel or a comp screwed on the end of the 6-inch barrel.

While past champions like Koenig are favored to win this year's Bianchi Cup Weigand has been continuing to polish his own armor with wins in 1990 of the Delaware, Pa., and New York State NRA Action Pistol Championships.

It's just possible that one of the handgunners trying the hardest to shoot a Perfect Cup with a Weigand Bianchi Tool might just be Jack himself.

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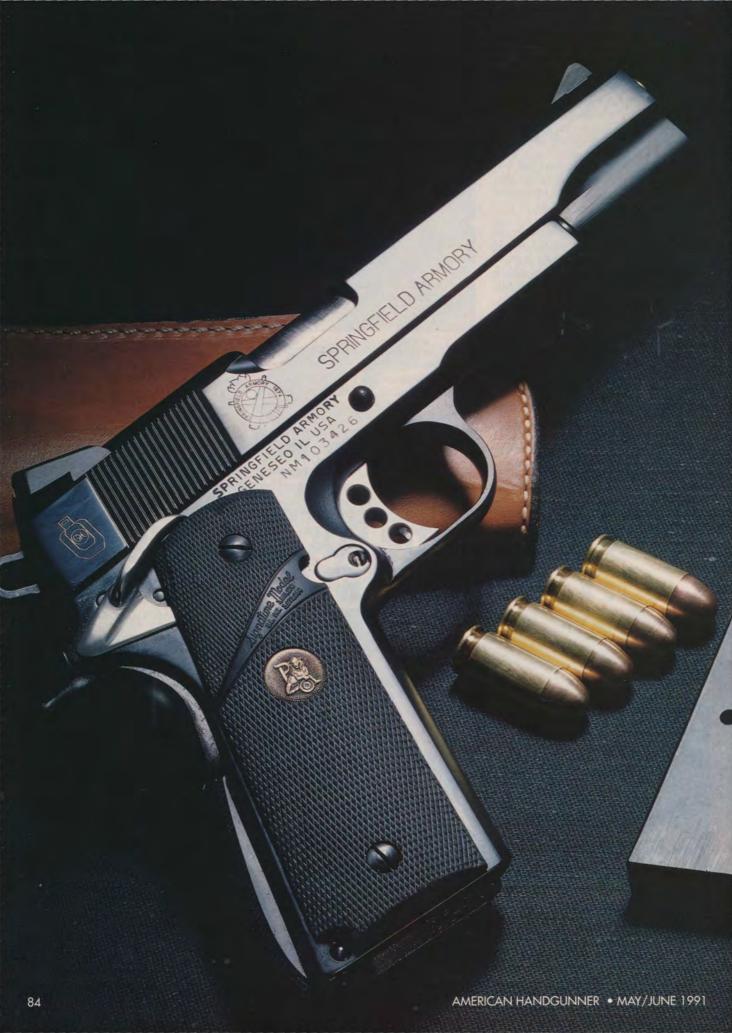
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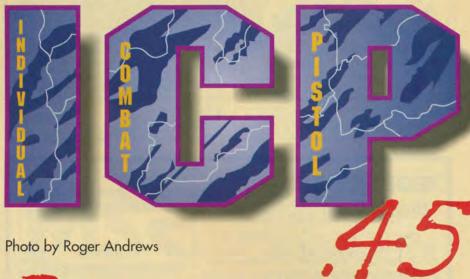
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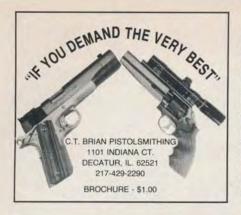
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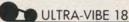
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COP TALK

Continued from page 18

explained why more emphasis needs to be made on rapid access and presentation of the defensive handgun, and less on long strings of fire at extended distances.

He discussed the extensive testing that showed his school why point-shooting didn't work, and explained why at even three and four paces, the Academy is teaching two-hand shooting using the sights.

Speed and hit factors, he reported, had both gone up. He then proceeded to demonstrate the same.

Offshoots directors, Jerry and Cathy Lane, were well received with Jerry leading the block on close tactical combat with the handgun. He forced the students to draw from all kinds of compromised positions, from kneeling to sitting to flat on their backs.

The rapid reaction shooting was done from 10 yards in, finishing with the shooter belly-to-belly with the target, the muzzle barely off the paper as the gas blast of the pistols literally eviscerated the targets.

Jerry also demonstrated a modified

Some gun designs simply don't allow the easy magazine drop of a combat competition gun.

speed reload of the auto that works particularly well with his choice of sidearm, the Glock. Jerry uses the weak hand to forcibly strip the magazine from the pistol and actually verify that it is clear of the magazine well before reaching for the fresh mag.

He feels that the slight sacrifice in speed is more than made up for in realworld reliability, noting that there are several reasons why, under stress, spent magazines don't always clear the gun during a speed reload. The shooter may have prematurely turned the gun, angling the grip wrong for a clean drop of the empty. Under stress, the officer may have insufficiently depressed the magazine release button. And some gun designs simply don't allow the easy magazine drop of a combat competition gun.

PBSO instructor Rick Myers is one of the agency's "use of force" instructors, all of whom are cross-trained in PR-24 and straight baton, unarmed defensive and arrest tactics, and special weapons as well as conventional police firearms. This allows the smoothest, most cohesive possible training to augment the escalation of force ladder used by Palm Beach Sheriff's Office in handling dangerous situations.

Also a gunfight veteran and squad

leader with PBSO's Special Reaction Team, Myers taught a well-received bloc that filled in gaps that are seldom addressed on police ranges, such as turning to engage an opponent at unpredictable angles.

NYPD assigned Captain John Cerar, head of the Firearms and Tactics Unit, to explain the lessons of the huge number of police gunfights in America's largest city. One of the last of the primarily revolverarmed big PDs, New York in 1990 had 14 officers wounded by suspects and none killed, but wounded nearly 70 of their

"When our cops watch their front sight, they hit what they're shooting at, and when they don't, they don't."

opponents and killed more than 40 with return fire.

Cerar credited the dramatically improved "gunfight victory ratio" to training that emphasized tactics and shot placement, with emphasis on use of the sights. "When our cops watch their front sight, they hit what they're shooting at," Cerar explained, "and when they don't, they don't."

Panel Of Experts

A panel of police firearms experts included the above authorities plus such attendees as Frank Repass and Evan Marshall. Though many points were hotly debated, there were some areas of universal agreement.

All felt the 10mm auto caliber was dead in the water, but that the .40 S&W offered great promise. The panel agreed that a quality backup handgun, supplemented with training, in its use is vital for the survival of the modern street cop

The panel suggested that much greater emphasis on the sort of fast, reactive, close range shooting taught at ASLET is needed nationwide Sights should be used except at contact or near-contact distance, said the panel. And, ending on a positive note, the panel said that police firearms training has come a helluva long way in the last decade!

In odd numbered years, ASLET firearms tracks are live fire. In even number years, they are lecture format with heavy emphasis on video and slides. The 1992 seminar will follow that format in January at Milwaukee, with some of the nation's top police combat veterans present to share their knowledge and skills. Interested police trainers can send photocopies of their ID to Mas Ayoob, LFI, P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH 03301, and request an ASLET application.

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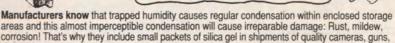






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BOWEN CUSTOM

Continued from page 50

At least that was what he was thinking. I had no such thoughts. This was no gamble, this was a sure thing. I have worked with enough of Bowen's custom Rugers—Blackhawks, Redhawks, Bisleys, GP-100's, and Security-Sixes—to know that as a gunsmith, Bowen is a master. This was like Rembrandt asking if he could "practice" painting my portrait!

Meet Hamilton Bowen

The first time I ever met Hamilton Bowen it was my good pleasure to shoot one of his .50 caliber Redhawks. I fired five shots standing at 100 yard silhouette pigs, taking them all down and then heard Bowen mutter, "I really should fix that gun. It just isn't right."

If this was the way his guns performed that were just not right, what were his

good ones like?

My two Colt Single Actions would go off to Bowen with the idea that I would take whatever turned out without complaint. Furthermore, this would be a part-time project that he could only work on sparingly.

If everything turned out as he hoped and as I knew it would— I would have two custom Colt Single Actions and Bowen Classic Arms would start business by offering custom work on Colt Single

Actions.

Colt Guinea Pigs

The two Colts sent to Bowen were a Single Action 12" Buntline Special .45 Colt and a 71/2" .44 Special. The .45 had started life as a .357, been converted to .45 Colt and then later had the standard barrel replaced with a Buntline Special barrel acquired somewhere along the way. It did not even come close to shooting to point-of-aim.

The .44 Special, one of my favorite calibers in the Single Action, had been picked up 20 years ago at a ridiculously low price because it was no longer original. The case-hardening was gone and the entire gun had been reblued. A Smith & Wesson rear sight had been installed along the way by well-known gunsmith Georg Hoenig and a Micro ramp front sight had been fitted.

The .44 Special shot beautifully, but I was a little leery of its frame for heavy loads since the top strap had been cut to install the Smith & Wesson adjustable rear. Normally I prefer .44 Special loads consisting of the 250 grain Keith bullet at 1,100 to 1,200 fps and, while I felt perfectly safe with these loads in a Smith & Wesson Model 24 or a Colt New Frontier, I used them sparingly in this Colt Single Action.

"John, what would you like as to caliber?" asked Hamilton Bowen. The first choice was easy. I've always wanted a

88

really good .32-20 Colt Single Action.

Bowen has made .32-20's on Ruger Blackhawks but they seem a little large and clumsy to me for this small caliber. Ruger offers the .32 Magnum on the little Single-Six, but this was not quite what I wanted. No, it had to be a Colt Single Action .32-20.

The reason probably goes back to my younger days when I read (and re-read) Elmer Keith's *Sixguns* and discovered that his first cartridge sixgun was a .32-20 Colt. Yes, the first Colt would be a target-sighted .32-20.

For the second gun, my first choice was a .44 Special with a five and one-half inch barrel. This would replace the .44 Special that was being lost. Nothing fancy here, just a well put together .44 Special.

But the more I thought about it, the more I leaned in favor of the .41 Magnum. Colt has never offered a .41 Magnum in the Colt Single Action, so this would be a true *custom* Single Action.

Bowen hesitated. He was not sure that he wanted to chamber the Single Action frame in the .41 Magnum. Yes, it probably would work out okay— for awhile. But there was always the possibility of stretching the frame with heavy loads. Instead he convinced me to really go the custom route and try his .41 Special.

Custom .32-20 Arrives

Time passed. Bowen called from time to time to let me know that he had not forgotten the Colt Single Actions and that he was studying the cylinders and ratchet design carefully before he tried to make new cylinders.

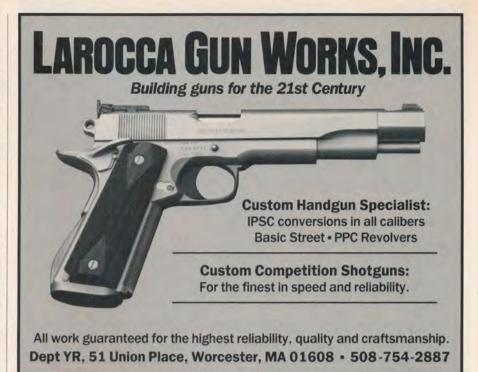
We talked on a regular basis as I tested numerous Bowen custom Rugers and he kept me informed on the progress of the Colts. About a year after I originally sent the sixguns to him, Hamilton called and asked if it would be permissible to recase color the frame of the .44 Special turned .32-20.

I gave him free rein to do whatever he thought best with either Colt. I was along for the ride and he was the driver. I had said earlier that I wanted an 8½" barrel on the .32-20 and I wanted a true .32-20, not a .30-20 which would allow the use of the large range of .30 caliber bullets. My interest was more in cast bullets that were designed for the original .32-20.

About two weeks later, UPS dropped off the first Colt. The package was opened with a year's built-up excitement coupled with the fact that I am a sucker for a good Single Action.

Even after all these years, I still dig out the old copies of Keith's Sixguns(1955), and Stebbin's Pistols, A Modern Encyclopedia (1961) just to look at the pictures of the old custom Colt Single Actions.

The Bowen Colt Single Action .32-20 that greeted my eyes was the most beautiful Single Action sixgun that I had ever laid my eyes on, bar none. My first





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TED BLOCKER HOLSTERS 5360 N.E. 112th St., Portland, OR 97220 Phone: (503) 254-9950 FAX: (503) 254-7172 thought was, "Even if this thing doesn't shoot, it is still worth it!"

Bowen had fitted it with an 81/2" Douglas premium barrel with a gentle taper from frame to muzzle end that helps hold down the weight. I had sent along an old Micro post front sight from my parts box, which Bowen had installed and reshaped perfectly.

But the crowning touch was the finish. The unfluted cylinder, barrel, ejector rod housing, and grip frame were all re-blued.

The top of the Douglas barrel is inscribed: ".32-20 WCF Cal." This may not be historically correct as I believe it is .32-20 or .32WCF, not both. But the inscription is beautifully lettered and Hamilton Bowen is not interested in restoring Colt Single Actions, only in customizing them.

The real heart-pounding part of the .32-20 sixgun was the frame, hammer and trigger. All three had been beautifully case-colored in Bowen's shop. I could hardly wait to remove the Colt hard rubber grips, that had been sent along with the .44 Special that was now a .32-20, and replace them with the genuine old and yellowed stag grips that properly belong on the old Colt.

With the heavy stag grips installed, the Bowen .32-20 Colt Single Action weighs in at 48 ounces, an even three pounds.

For those that may wonder about a .44 Special lover committing the unpardonable sin of allowing a .44 Special to be turned into another caliber, not to worry. Bowen returned the original .44 barrel and cylinder and they are now at rest in my parts box waiting to be installed in some Colt Single Action in the future.

I was so happy with the finish on the .32-20 that my old marred-and-scarred .44 Special Bisley Colt was sent off to Bowen Classic Arms with one simple set of instructions: Finish it like the .32-20.

As I progressed through the loads I had assembled, the Bowen .32-20 shot better and better with the WW231 and H4227 loads getting right down close to the one-inch mark and the old #2400 load giving a very beautiful three-quarter inch group.

This sixgun was a definite winner. The only problem that surfaced was the fact that it was shooting low. This was easily taken care off as I had the same amount removed from the top of the front sight as I had gap under the raised rear sight.

This brought it in real close and by raising the rear sight a few clicks, it was right on the money. It is now perfectly sighted and shoots under an inch at 25 yards. "Bowen, your first attempt at customizing a Colt Single Action is a rousing success," I thought to myself.

Bowen .41 Special

I had no sooner test-fired the first Bowen Custom Single Action when the second one, the .41 Special, appeared at the door. While the .32-20 looked completely custom, the .41 Special was more



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on the order of a standard 51/2" Colt Single Action accept for two things readily apparent— the unfluted cylinder and the sides of the hammer are now blued.

Why didn't Colt, and why doesn't Ruger, do this with their single actions? A simple touch that makes the already attractive sixgun even more so.

Topping off the second Bowen Colt is the inscription ".41 Special Cal." on the top of the Douglas barrel. Bowen's lettering is perfectly executed and a nicer style than most factory lettering. The only thing I have seen recently to match it is found on the new Smith & Wesson Magna-Classic .44 Magnum.

Just as with the .32-20, Bowen had completely worked over the action making sure each single action was perfectly timed. Since the .45 Colt Buntline Special, now transformed into a .41 Special, already had excellent case-coloring. Bowen left this part untouched and simply re-blued the balance of the gun.

I had sent the .45 Colt, now .41 Special, to Bowen with a pair of homemade walnut one-piece stocks, but as luck would have it I took it along with me to a gun show the first weekend and picked up a pair of genuine stag grips that fitted perfectly.

There is a great deal of variation in Colt grip frames but the first pair I tried did the job. They aren't aged as the old yellow grips on the .32-20, but they do



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look good and feel good.

With the heavy stag grips installed, the weight of the 51/2" barrelled Bowen .41 Special Single Action comes in at 40 ounces, making it quite comfortable to

My thinking on the .41 Special in a Colt Single Action was that one could safely achieve 1,100 to 1,200 fps with a 200 to 220 grain bullet with no strain on the cylinder and frame. Or about what a heavily loaded .44 Special Colt Single Action can do with a 250 grain Keith Bullet.

Since I really did not know where to begin, I started conservatively and worked my way up using the Bull-X 215 grain semi-wadcutter .411" bullet. These bullets are available from Bull-X by calling toll-free 1-800-248-3845. I have had excellent results with Bull-X brand bullets in 9mm, .38, 10mm, .41, .44, and .45 caliber. However, I was not prepared for what was about to happen with the .41 Special.

When I hit the load of 12.5 grains of #2400 under the .411" Bull-X 215 grain bullet, I could not believe what was happening as shot after shot simply plopped into the same hole. This load clocked out at 1,063 fps and measured a target-grade .625". Big bore sixguns just do not come any better than this!

Upping the charge one grain to 13.5 grains of #2400, opens the group up to a still very satisfying 1.75" and 1,167 fps. For now at least, I will call this maximum

Once again Colt Single Action lovers have a source of custom work.

for the .41 Special.

Hamilton Bowen will offer the .41 Special in the Colt Single Action, but of more significance for defensive work will be the fact that he will be offering the same caliber in a Ruger Security-Six. This would make a nearly perfect defensive sixgun.

A little over a year ago, Hamilton Bowen would not look at a Colt Single Action. Now he realizes what great guns

they actually are.

Once again Colt Single Action lovers have a source of custom work on the sixgun too good to die. I feel very fortunate to have the first two Custom Single Action Colts from Bowen Classic Arms. The first two out of many that will soon be found amongst shooters who appreciate a great sixgun and top quality work.

For a complete catalog of Bowen's work on Ruger's as well as his Colt Single Action brochure, send \$3 to Bowen Classic Arms, P.O. Box 67, Dept. AH, Louisville, TN 37777 or call (615) 984-3583.



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SILUETAS

Continued from page 28

be maintained on a national level and each member nation would have its own national organization and would determine its membership and fees.

COMPETITION: Types of handgun competition would be expanded under ISSU rules. There would be five big bore categories, four .22 categories, two field pistol categories, four air pistol categories, and four black powder categories. The categories and classifications would be as follows. Scores below 13 would be termed recruit or unclasified.

Big Bore Pistol: Production Single Shot, Production Revolver, Production Standing, Unlimited, and Scoped Handgun.

.22 Handgun: .22 Production, .22 Revolver, .22 Standing Production, and .22 Unlimited.

Field Pistol: Scoped Production Handgun, Open Sight Production Handgun.

Air Pistol: Production Sport Pistol (standing and freestyle), Unlimited Air Pistol (standing and freestyle).

Black Powder Revolver: Authentic/ Authentic Reproduction (standing and freestyle), Unlimited (standing and freestyle)

Black Powder Pistol: Authentic/ Authentic Reproduction and Unlimited.

The classifying system for shooters for *Production Revolver, Production Single Shot, Air Sports Pistol, black Powder Pistol* or *Revolver* would be A Class: 38-40, B Class: 26-37, C Class: 13-25.

For *Production Standing* or *Field Pistol* the breakdown would be A: 28-40, B: 21-27, C: 13-20.

For *Unlimited*, A: 39-40, B: 26-38, C: 13-25.

And finally for the *Scoped Handgun*, the categories would be A: 39-40, B: 31-38, C: 21-30 with anyone shooting below 21 in the *Recruit* class.

A Worldly Affair

IHMSA Internationals and NRA Nationals are held each summer and are open to any competitor who has shot in the required number of matches each year and who can afford the entry fees and the cost of travel. Under ISSU, each member nation would sponsor only one entry per category and a maximum total of three alternates.

This would make it a true world class competition and I can envision local clubs sending their best to state or regional matches and each country's silhouette organization paying the expenses of their best shooters to attend and compete in the world competition.

ISSU also proposes, "In order not to exclude any ISSU competitor who considers him or herself to be qualified to compete at a world level event, a 40 round qualifying match will be held prior

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to the world championship." Thus far all championship matches have been open to anyone. This proposal provides for selecting the best handgunners from around the world to compete head to head.

All silhouette matches in the United States are fired on steel targets. ISSU allows for the use of paper targets in any country which prohibits the use of steel targets. Steel targets will be used for all world competition and world records cannot be set using paper targets.

At the present time, both NRA and IHMSA have rules to keep silhouetting an amateur sport. The ISSU proposal

Our local range is shared by both black powder shooters and silhouette shooters and so far never the twain shall meet.

continues this idea with subsidies or sponsorship being strictly prohibited. Most other sports as well as shooting sports have both amateur and professional categories. Silhouetting never has allowed this.

ISSU recognizes the older shooter with three provisions. One allows auxiliary lenses attached to the eye or eye glass frame. A second proposal allows special classifications for senior shooters and, most importantly, allows the use of scopes for these shooters on regulation targets. Unfortunately, an age of 55 is set as a minimum and most shooters who need scopes need them long before then.

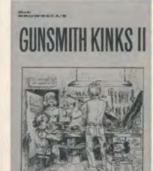
The third "senior-citizen" proposal sets up a scoped category that, along with Field Pistol and Black Powder Pistol/Revolver, would be fired on half-sized targets but they would be set at long-range distances. The weight limit on scoped handguns would be five pounds.

The black powder category is something new. Our local range is shared by both black powder shooters and silhouette shooters and so far never the twain shall meet.

Under ISSU rules proposals, black powder shooters and silhouette shooters would be brought together and I for one would be most interested in both the authentic category, which would allow the use of either Colt or Remington black powder cap-and-ball sixguns or reproductions of same, and the unlimited revolver, in which I would expect the number one revolver to be the Ruger Old Army. This sixgun will do one-inch at 25 yards and would make an excellent silhouette sixgun. I could also see this category expanding into black powder cartridge revolvers.

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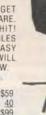
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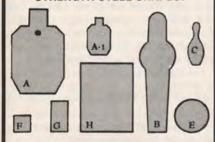
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1025 SCHOOL STREET ROCKFORD, IL 61105-0898 For governing the new organization, ISSU proposes a slate of officers consisting of a President, Vice-president, and Secretary-Treasurer all elected by a general assembly consisting of delegates from each country. A supervisory Executive Committee, a Technical Committee, and a committees for each of the categories, pistol shooting, airgun shooting, and black powder shooting would also be set up.

Of course, I have only covered the basics in the new proposal which runs over 40 pages. Now it is up to silhouette shooters. Are we interested in a truly international organization that would oversee all silhoutte shooting?

Are we ready for a marriage of black powder and silhouetting?

IHMSA And Scopes

Is this the only way we will get silhouette shooting IHMSA-style to accept scopes? So far, the ISSU proposal only touches on the ground floor level of silhouetting shooting with scopes but it is a beginning.

IHMSA recently had a "test run" of scopes in long range silhouetting and the latest issue of *IHMSA News* reports that only three clubs have reported trying the long-range scope classification.

But the deck was somewhat stacked as provisions were made for the use of Field Pistol targets for long-range, big-bore, scoped-silhouetting. How many clubs are willing to allow their Field Pistol targets to be subject to the stress of big bore shooting?

The biggest question that remains is whether or not American shooters are willing to really recognize that there are other silhouetters around the world and release the total control that we have had on silhouette shooting.

Along with this issue is the companion one that recognizes that anti-gunners, and also anti-hunting forces, are not peculiarly American but are world wide. Would an organization such as ISSU help to combat these anti-gun ideas?

If ISSU is brought into play, will the IHMSA Internationals and NRA Nationals be changed or would they simply be used to select the best shooters in the country?

Would silhouetting become a championship event for the best shooters only?

Would we lose the average and mediocre shooters from the sport if this happens?

The next step is up to silhouette shooters. If you are an NRA shooter and interested in the ISSU proposal one way or the other contact the NRA and let them know your feelings.

If you shoot under IHMSA rules, let headquarters know how you feel about the concept of ISSU.

In either case, you can also provide feedback to ISSU by contacting L.E. Vallery, Dalveien 2, 1396 Bjorkas, Norway.

LASERS

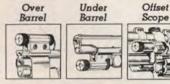
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WORLD SHOOT

Continued from page 59

followed by Vice President Egil Smestad of Norway.

For two hours IPSC did not exist. Then on a shaky compromise Denis

After January, 1993, major caliber is only acceptable in .40 caliber and above.

accepted reinstatement and the various issues were resolved enough to let things cripple by until the next world assembly at Johannesburg in the fall of 1991.

Uncertain Rule Changes

Uncertainty is the legacy of the Adelaide World Assembly. The official minutes are incomplete and unclear. Information mailed by J. P. Denis indicate shooters can expect the following.

A motion passed that after January, 1993, major caliber is only acceptable in .40 caliber and above.

A new three-level power factor and associated target scoring system is accepted in principle. Five regions— Belgium, Ecuador, France, New Zealand and Sweden—volunteered to field test and report.

Critical details of the three power levels and target zone scoring will await the decision of future world assemblies but the following is Denis' best estimate based on his knowledge of the mood of the various regional directors.

Minor Caliber— power factor 120 Medium Caliber— power factor 150 Major Caliber— power factor 180

Target Zone Scoring	À	В	C	D
Minor	5	2	2	1
Medium	5	3	3	2
Major	5	4	4	3

Ted Carder of Montrose, Colo., an astute observer of action shooting, is blessed with that rare gift, common sense. He and his wife Dee may be the most avid if not the only true spectators in the entire sport. Arguably they had the best time in Australia of anyone. Ted suggested that the world assembly should be not be held before the match. Held after, its arguments would not set the mood for the match as it now does.

The miracle is that the international game exists. All shooters benefit from goodwill engendered. That shooters of divergent language and culture and subject to binding and often conflicting laws of their countries have such dedication is testimony to its worth.

MY GUNS

Continued from page 34

grooves slightly shallower than the original. By careful filing, one can remove the shallow 20 line grooves and replace them with 30 without any noticeable difference in thickness.

Another way around this problem is to produce what I call a "wedge" housing. This is an arched housing that I cut on a straight line, only on an angle away from the bottom of the frame, thus producing a wedge effect. This results in a cross between a flat housing and an arched one. It also removes the 20 line grooves.

If my elbow is not worn out yet, now is the time to cut diamonds in the trigger guard. This is the smallest area of checkering to do, but this only makes the area that much more important. It is also a blind area, so work here is extremely difficult. This is an area of great variance among individual guns, so there is always a bit of difference between jobs. The goal is to make them all look exactly alike.

Squaring trigger guards has never been my favorite thing to do. I have always preferred to remove the radius at the junction of the trigger guard and frame, thus raising the finger even more to fight recoil. There was a time past when the squaring would prevent the gun's fully seating in a holster. Nowadays, most all competition holsters will accept just about any trigger guard design.

Fitting The Custom Parts

Now that much of the hard machining and checkering work has been completed, I will begin the installation of the custom parts starting with the Videki trigger. I have long preferred his design because of the ever consistent quality. Every one is exactly like the last.

All frames from all manufacturers vary in the trigger slot area because it is broached and close tolerances are very hard to hold with this type of machining. Videki furnishes a slightly oversized trigger than can be worked down gently until the fit is just the way John Browning intended. These National Match triggers come with an adjustable overtravel stop screw, required for light trigger pulls. More on that later as we set the trigger pull.

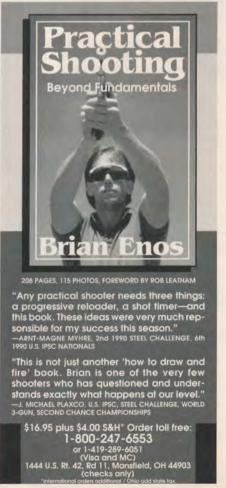
With the Videki trigger in place, the next logical part is the High-Sweep beavertail. Fitting is now a simple matter because most of the metal has already been removed on the mill. I use a jig of my own design to do the final fitting. Once the part is functional on the gun, a .75" sanding drum installed on an air grinder is used to grind a close match between the frame and grip safety.

This is another area that all guns, no matter what the brand name, seem to vary considerably. If you are fitting my Brown



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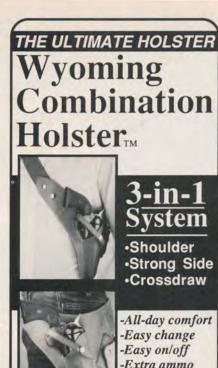




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beavertail yourself, keep in mind you should remove hardly any metal from the part itself. Most of the metal removal should be done on the frame of the gun, not the beavertail. The Brown beavertail is made to minimum thickness and if any extensive grinding is done on it, you will be looking at a neat little hole in the back of your gun.

With the beavertail properly installed, the ambi safety can be fitted in the gun. This is more of a check than anything else. Later, after the trigger job is done, final fitting will be done on the safety to make sure it blocks the sear.

While I am working around this area, it is a good time to take the hammer and sear pins to the surface grinder to flatten out the ball nose that the factory provides. My ambi safety fits on the gun exactly like Armand Swenson's, the originator of the design. This means that the additional side has a foot which is captured underneath the grip panel. This additional side or foot will interfere with the smooth function if it has to ride over two ball nose pins. They should be flattened out to flush or slightly below the frame.

By now we should have had enough of working on the frame to last for a week or so. Let's move on to the slide.

Slip Sliding Away

I have already inspected the slide so I know it will be a good one. One thing to remember, this is a heat-treated part, so it must be given respect so as not to damage the hardness. Although I have a heli-arc welder, I prefer not to use it on a heattreated slide. (The frames are another matter, as they are much softer and can withstand much thermal shock.)

I have seen slides change considerably in their fit on frames with subsequent machining on them. I prefer to do all heavy machining first and fit them later to the frames. This gives me a much better fit which will not be changing during the process.

First, the original front sight is removed and discarded. Then I machine a flat about .400" wide on top of the slide. This gets metal out of the way so I can machine grooves on top later and allows me to cut a .125" slot over the original front sight slot.

As I said earlier, I hate to weld on a heat treated part. I much prefer to silver solder a piece of tool steel into a slot to cover the original cut much like a front sight, only machined flush. When properly done, it is

nearly invisible to the naked eye.

The installation of a Bo-Mar BMCS rear sight is as basic to the combat gun as the checkering of the forestrap. Still, there are good jobs, bad jobs, and the very best. I believe, the very best looking job has the Bo-Mar buried deep enough to work with a .190" tall front sight and metal left beside each side of the movable leaf. I have put them on this way for two years now and like the appearance more than ever.

For several years, I machined the slide clear across for the Bo Mar's leaf, this being the easiest way to do it. The justification being that the area was easier to clean and would not catch dirt or interfere with the operation of the sight. Still, customer demand for the more difficult and cosmetically appealing installation won out and now I am a complete convert.

It really makes no practical difference if the sight leaf sides have been hidden or not. The most important thing is that the sight be installed in the exact center of the slide. This *must* be done with a dial indicator. The Bo-Mar requires a hole drilled and tapped into the slide for the elevation screw. This hole must be located perfectly because the function of the sight depends on it.

Totally Useless Touches

If one had to point to a useless option on a competition gun, he could well mention serration of the slide rear. I suppose its purpose is to eliminate glare from the rear of the slide, but any such glare has been little used in the past as an excuse for misses.

On the other hand, the serrations do match the ones furnished on the Bo Mar rear sight, they do look really neat, and they certainly can't hurt anything. Besides that, the customer expects it to be done.

My favorite is 50 lines per inch, but 40 looks good too. Thirty looks like Missouri corn rows and 20 is out of the question.

While we are on the subject, I never like to serrate the extractor. Most of them move slightly and the lines never perfectly match. Besides that, the extractor is a replaceable part and any future replacement will not have any grooves or any convenient way to do them.

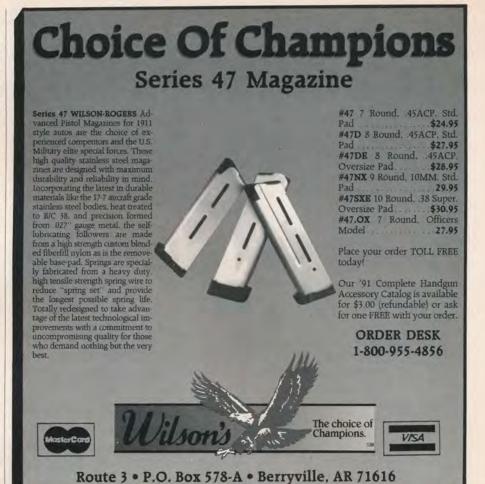
Slide To Frame Fit

Moving on with more slide work, now is the time to open the ejection port on the Series 70 guns. For years I have made them look exactly like the Gold Cup port right down to the relief cut on the rear. The newer pistols have the port larger than the earlier ones, but there is still room for improvement and the relief cut, or scallop.

This little scallop prevents any denting of the brass and somewhat calms down the flight of the brass away from the gun. The inside edge of the port should have a good sized chamfer cut on it to eliminate any sharp edges that might slow down ejection.

Now that most of the metal has been removed from the slide and all those nasty stresses have been relieved, I can go ahead and fit it up to the frame. My system on this job is the result of years of experience and has been proven to work time and again.

Pistolsmiths vary widely on their philosophy on slide tightening and more than once I have been left with the impression that my listener thought that I was either





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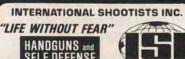
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a genius or plain crazy.

My system goes something like this. I believe that the longest lasting and best functioning guns will come from two mating surfaces that are perfectly parallel. That is, the guide rails on both slide and frame have no high spots to rub off, thus loosening up the fit. If both the surfaces are absolutely parallel, any wear that takes place must occur along the entire length of those surfaces, thus insuring a longer lasting gun.

How is this done? Another custommade jig and a surface grinder. For those of you who didn't take machine shop in school, a surface grinder is a highly precise toolroom piece of equipment. They usually have a magnetic table for holding the work, which reciprocates underneath a grinding wheel. Such machines will all hold at least .0005" tolerance and this is more than enough for our needs.

The jig I mentioned holds the slide upside down by the grooves and the wheel is brought down alongside and slightly above the rail. As the wheel comes in contact with the slide, the metal is ground away with a smooth surface resulting. Since the slide is positioned by the rail grooves, a perfectly parallel lower slide is the result.

The other side will be ground exactly like the first and the thickness will be measured. I add about .002" to this measurement and then choose a heat treated plate to slip into the frame grooves.

Parts In Harmony

Next comes a generous attitude adjustment with a smooth-faced hammer applied to the top of the frame. This expands the frame as well as reduces the groove width.

Next, the frame sides are brought parallel slightly under the slide groove width. Even with the calculated .002" total clearance, the slides will never go on the frames without pounding, shoving, pushing, lapping, and considerable application of good old elbow grease.

The result is a smooth, absolutely parallel slide-to-frame fit that will last through thousands and thousands of rounds. As you might have noticed, I never squeeze a slide in a vise. I consider it very risky to squeeze on a heat-treated part. It also would pull the rails out of parallel on the bottom surface.

Some shooters come from the bullseye ranks and insist on a slide-to-frame fit with *no* perceptible movement. For this customer, I suggest we use Bob Krieger's patented method of "round pin" slide rails. I have tried his system on a few guns and can testify that it works well.

Bob's system involves installing a hardened steel rod in each side of the frame for the newly machined slide to mate to. Bob also prefers all machining work to be done on the slide before installation of his system because he too knows of the stresses placed on the heattreated slide when one starts machining on it.

Bar-Sto Barrel

Hopefully, when all this work has been completed, our friendly UPS driver has arrived with the new Bar-Sto barrel because this is the next step. This is another area where pistolsmiths disagree frequently, but I'll tell my story and let the metal chips fall where they may.

Irv Stone is the chief-in-charge of Bar-Sto Precision, and I am proud to say we are longtime friends. One thing we agree perfectly on is barrel fit. My objective in barrel fit is to achieve both accuracy and function. You must have both, as one is no good without the other in a competition gun.

It has always been a great advantage to me to have a tremendous amount of high precision machinery on hand. Barrel fitting is one area where I use this machinery to its fullest.

The barrel locking lugs will be cut to the exact dimension to make the link work as John Browning intended it. In my shop this requires a cross-slide rotary table mounted on a vertical mill.

Close examination of the locking lug area reveals that the contour has two curves and two flats. It is the location and size of the radii of this contour that determines the proper function of the gun. Too tight, and the gun will unlock slowly, too loose and the accuracy suffers.

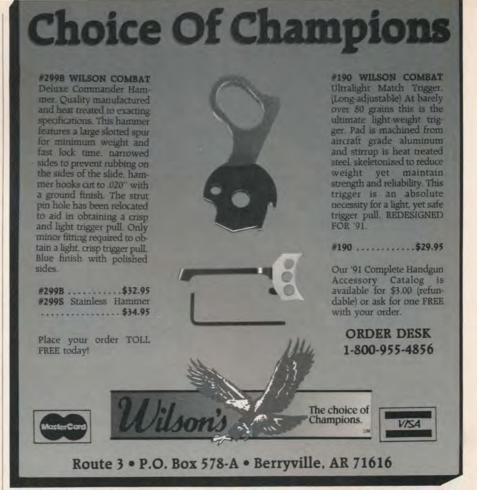
If the radius is out of location, there could be a problem that I call "barrel bump." This is where the barrel hits the slide stop post, instead of smoothly sliding over it, while the gun is feeding.

This causes an occasional malfunction that will stump the most experienced gunsmith unless he knows exactly how the lugs should be cut.

A properly fitted link on the 1911 pistol can be checked by holding the slide and barrel assembly, upside down and inserting the slide stop through the link. Apply pressure to the rear of the slide, directly on each end of the slide stop post, without touching the link. You should now have a slight movement of the link from front to rear and side to side. If there is any binding at this point, I can guarantee the gun will malfunction eventually. The barrel must lock up tightly on the slide stop post, with the link being slightly free.

The top of the barrel should be fitted into the slide so that they fit solidly in the intended grooves. It is not necessary, or particularly desirable, to fit the hood tightly. Barrel centering will be taken care of it by a close fit in the top locking lug area.

This hand-fitting is a slow process requiring much assembly and disassembly. A fresh swipe of spotting ink in the barrel grooves each time the barrel is checked shows the high areas that must be removed by careful filing. One must





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exercise caution not to move the barrel out of center by removal of too much metal on one side of the barrel.

A slight tap on the rear of the slide with a dead blow composition hammer seats, or attempts to seat, the oversize barrel. As the barrel comes closer and closer to fitting, the ink spots grow larger and larger. Finally, the slide will seat the barrel fully with only firm thumb pressure.

A lockup like this one will assure the maximum accuracy possible from the barrel and load, while functioning perfectly with little care or cleaning.

Notice that I do not depend on slide tightness for accuracy. My method locks the barrel tightly into the slide so that they become one unit before firing.

Because the sights mount on the slide, and the barrel locks tightly into it, consistent accuracy is possible. The result is that the barrel acts like a wedge locking itself into the slide and causing the slide to position itself firmly on the frame just before firing. Upon firing, the top unit can travel backward up to .100" before unlocking can occur, at which point the entire assembly is fully free of any binding or excess friction.

To Bush Or Not To Bush?

I have not mentioned the barrel bushing up to this point because I have used an oversize one to fit the back of the barrel. That is, oversize on the inside and undersize on the outside. By using a sloppy bushing for the initial fitting, I have eliminated another source of confusion.

If this was to be a standard gun using a barrel bushing, one should now be fitted snugly into the slide and then carefully opened up to fit the muzzle of the new barrel. Now that the rear of the barrel has been final-fitted, it is easy to figure out that any binding has to be the new bushing.

This particular gun is to be fitted with one of my heavy-barrel Maxi-Comps so there will never be a bushing fitted. We will go right on to fitting a barrel sleeve to bring the barrel diameter up to the slide's inside dimensions.

This, too, is an area where gunsmiths differ considerably in their opinions. To bush or not to bush, that is the question.

For many years I built the standard Maxi-Comp and it used a bushing. In 1984 I introduced the Mini-Comp that, although much smaller, used a barrel

My good friend Eddy Ramirez wanted me to combine the two. That is, use the full-slide configuration of the Maxi-Comp and the barrel sleeve portion of the Mini-Comp. The resulting gun would be much heavier than the earlier version and was named the heavy-barrel Maxi-Comp.

The new design had a few other advantages also. Now the end of the slide could be trimmed slightly to remove any factory polish "round off" and the result was a better fit between the compensator and slide. Cosmetic to be sure, but we are past the stage where a shooter just wanted to go fast. He wanted to look good too.

Heavier is better for most shooting, and heavier guns are in demand now, so I need to get this sleeve wrapped around the new barrel. After cutting and crowning on the lathe, the muzzle will be threaded 40 threads per inch and the sleeve trial-fitted in place.

I have the sleeves made up slightly oversized on a CNC lathe to save me valuable time. Now the sleeve goes to the surface grinder to cylindrical grind it to a perfect fit with the inside of the slide. I usually grind them to a firm fit and then finish by hand-lapping for a perfect fit. This last procedure insures the internal roundness of the slide as well.

Most of the time, the addition of the sleeve has tightened up the barrel fit slightly so there is a tiny bit of adjusting to do there. This time it is more of a finesse than hard fitting.

Fitting The Maxi-Comp

I usually finish-chamber the barrels about now and do any necessary throating. This procedure will surprise some people who believe that a pistolsmith throats a barrel by trial and error. Actually, most all pistolsmiths use gauges for throating, taking them right to the maximum safe depth the first time, keeping all the angles perfectly aligned.

The slide is next in line for some more work and the next logical thing to do is trim off the end. This is the area I spoke of earlier where the factory usually gets a little excited with the polish and rounds off the muzzle end. This I will usually trim off when the slide is surface ground.

The trick here is to get it cut off at the right angle. Angle, you say, what angle? It's the angle the barrel produces when it locks in the full up position and can be measured from the bottom of the slide rails. A match grade barrel, fitted the way I have described, is muzzle down about one degree to the slide rails when fully locked.

To produce this angle, I place shim stock underneath the front of the slide rail, right behind the recoil spring plug while the slide is clamped upright in an angle plate. If the barrel was fully locked and in the slide, it would be absolutely perpendicular.

All this work is beginning to look somewhat like a gun now, except it seems to need something on the end. It must be time to do the impossible—manufacture something that looks like it belongs there and always should have been there.

To save me more valuable time, the Maxi-Comp blanks have also been made up in-house on a CNC, but oversized for precision hand-fitting. One of the blanks will be screwed onto the protruding sleeve, or muzzle, of the gun.

There is one problem. It will not line up with an acceptable slide-to-comp gap because there is no way to control where the



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What to do? The solution is simple, my dear Watson. The threads being 40 per inch means that for each revolution the comp turns, it moves .025". If it lacks one-half revolution of screwing up tight, that figures out to .0125" plus the clearance needed between the slide and comp. This amount is surface ground off the back of the compensator blank for a perfect fit.

Now the compensator muzzle will be bored out to suit the caliber. Of course, this cut must be centered perfectly on the new bore. Very close tolerances are a requirement for the best compensator function, but too close and the bullet could hit the end, destroying accuracy.

Comp To Slide Fit

It looks like the blank is ready to be attached permanently and we are fortunate nowadays to have lots of good epoxies to choose from. I can well remember the early days when Locktite was the only game in town. It would hold for a few months to a few years, only to come loose at the worst possible time.

Now there are many good two-part epoxy resins that possess unbelievable strength and will withstand heat as well. For some time now I have used the practice of gluing the thing together while still in blank form and doing all final machining, finishing, and bluing. Nothing seems to hurt these high strength epoxies.

There are no secrets to machining the compensator to match the slide. Just an awful lot of hard work. I do use several cutters that are close to matching the slide contours, but most of it is hand finishing the old fashioned way.

Since I passed 40 years of age, I have had considerable trouble with my elbow. The doc says tennis elbow but I don't even know how to play. Most of my pistolsmith friends have similar problems. Richard Heinie has trouble with his shoulder, Steve Nastoff has elbow problems more severe than mine.

Most of it comes from hand checkering, but much of the stress comes from the hours and hours of hand-finishing steel with files and abrasives.

Front Sight

The last operation on the compensator is the installation of the front sight. I use my design that is installed by machining a .1875" groove down the exact center of the comp to a depth of .100". Now a .300" wide by 60° dovetail cutter will be used to finish the slot.

These cutters are available from Brownell's Inc. and were requested by Jimmy Clark to install his own front sight. I chose the same specs to install my front sight to take advantage of the existing inventory of cutters.

The last machining operation will be to cut the grooves into the top of the slide. Judging from the number of calls I get from new pistolsmiths, this must be

considered a fairly difficult job. Really, it's not.

I have a fixture that holds the slide, barrel and comp assembly on its side and I use a vertical mill. A standard 60° milling cutter is employed with the spacing of each groove held by moving the table up the required amount. I usually use 30 or 40 lpi so that a checkering file is available for clean up if necessary.

Detailing

Now it seems that the gun is nearly finished. Well, at least all the machining. But it seems that I spend an equal amount of time doing the machining as I do hand-finishing. Now the gun has to go through the stage that I call "detailing."

I start out by glass bead finishing most all the surfaces except the slide sides. Then, under a strong light, a close inspection reveals all the little flaws. These must be gone over—polished, perfected, and glass bead finished all over again.

Then there is the trigger pull. This is

If the gun will not function four magazines perfectly, then it goes back to the bench for further adjustment.

what I think is the hardest of all of the jobs I do. It is not unusual to spend over a full day per gun detailing, finishing and setting the trigger pull. Then the safeties must be fitted to operate with their new components and all systems checked out for function.

Finally, the piece is ready for test firing. It does look like a gun at this point, but a pretty ugly one. Only traces of blue are found here and there, some glass bead finish, some mirror polish, blue rear sight, white front one. But they do shoot, and sometimes they even work.

If the gun will not function four magazines perfectly, then it goes back to the bench for further adjustment. Usually, it's the extractor too loose or tight, or the barrel is still a little snug.

Once a pistol functions to my satisfaction, it is disassembled again for the last time. This time it is cleaned and glass bead finished another time. All except the sides of the slide. They will be hand polished with 600 paper, then 800, then 1000 grit for the final mirror finish.

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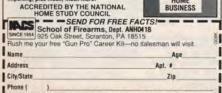
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frame and all lower parts will be finished in electroless nickel. This is the finish I have preferred for many years and I know it well. Electroless nickel is four times thicker than hard chrome, has excellent lubricity qualities, and is slightly better on rust protection. I won't use anything else.

Now at last the gun can be reassembled and test fired again. Assuming all functions well, the customer will soon receive a invoice for the final amount. He probably gets the invoice and says. "What gun?" because he forgot he ever ordered it. Hopefully, he does remember and still wants the gun.

What To Expect

Most of today's customers understand the time and effort that goes into a custom pistol and try to be patient. Believe me, they are worth the waiting time necessary.

Total time spent per gun? Most people don't believe me when I say that I really don't know. A standard machine shop rate per hour would be close to a good pistolsmith's time. The machinery and skills are very similar. Keeping track of time spent per gun would consume more time than it would be worth due to the variances in each piece.

I spend whatever time it takes to get the effect I want and the customers seem to like it. The accessory business is doing well and the backlog of custom gun work is growing steadily. I also notice a lot of shooters ordering a second and even a third gun.

My suggestions to a perspective custom gun buyer would be to first get some experience shooting with a stock gun, and see what other shooters in your club are using. Then send for the catalogs of several pistolsmiths to compare various offerings. By this time you should have an idea of what you desire in a custom gun.

Don't forget to include the catalog price with your request. I think most pistolsmiths would give the catalog away free, but the postage cost really mounts up.

After comparing the catalog price list and delivery estimates, you should be able to find something for your needs. Everyone I know offers "packages" to fit almost every budget.

After placing your order, just sit back and wait for your custom creation to be made. There will be a day, sometime in the future, when your custom gun will be ready.

And then you'll understand how special it is to own something that was handmade just for you.

Readers interested in Ed Brown's guns will want to thumb through Ed's new catalog featuring the incomperable photography of American Handgunner's Ichiro Nagata. It's worth the three bucks that Ed asks you to send (refundable on your subsequent order). Write to Ed at Rt. 2, Box 2922, Perry, MO 63462 and be sure and tell him that you enjoyed his very first article!

PSC

Continued from page 17

enthusiastic handgun experimenter, the cost is easily repaid by the time and ammunition saved.

For more information you can write Ransom International Corp., P.O. Box 3845, Prescott, AZ 86302 or call (602) 778-7899.

When school starts this fall I want my "How I Spent My Summer Vacation" essay to start out "I went to IPSC matches all summer long." Here are some good ones:

Colorado State Championships, July 5-7, Montrose, Colo. Directed by master class shooter Paul Miller; expect good stage design, lots of shooting, and an excellent prize table. Match fee \$95; phone Paul at (303)249-4227.

Western States IPSC Championship, July 17-20, Reno, Nev. Match Director Cal Eilrich indicates that the 1991 match will feature more rounds, more action stages, and over \$30,000 worth of prizes. Match fee \$125 if paid by June 1; the 300 slots available are sure to go quickly. Phone Cal at (702)972-9277 or Doug Crawford at (702)673-9113 from 7-9 p.m. PST.

Canadian IPSC Nationals, August 2-5, Edmonton, Alberta. 17 stages, 230 rounds, excellent course design, and a good prize table make this a match you shouldn't miss. The host club can provide the permits needed to bring your handguns into Canada, but give them plenty of time to handle the paperwork. Call Ted Pritchett at (403)273-2046 or 286-5523.

Miller Invitational, August 15-18, Fulton, NY. The big news for 1991 is that there will be a practical revolver championship at this match, organized by Baumannize, Inc., makers of the clever 7-shot conversion for N-frame S&W .357's. They're talking about trophies and plaques down to 10th place and over \$7,000 worth of prizes for wheelgunners (who are still eligible for the \$40,000 main prize table). Write Baumannize, Inc., Box 286, Bohemia, NY 11716-0286 or call Jack Parisi at (516) 567-0001.

IPSC Postal Match, If you want to shoot a major match but don't want to travel, check this issue for information on the American Handgunner International IPSC Postal Match.

Safari Shoot: If you want a really exotric match, check out the Zimbabwe Safari Shoot, Oct. 3-17 in darkest Africa. Entry fees for three venues (Troutbeck, Bulawayo, Harare) including lodging, meals, transportation and sight-seeing is about \$1,100. You'll be housed with local shooters. Look for about 25 stages and 500+ rounds with, if you're so inclined, the chance to take in a short hunting safari at the same time! Call Steve Herberth at (502) 896-3289

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TRI-CALIBER

Continued from page 45

7.65mm Browning. It has even had some military and police use in the past. With the recent introduction of some high-performance .32 loads by Winchester, Glaser and Buffalo, many American handgunners are now discovering this fine little cartridge.

It has lighter recoil than the .380, and it is inherently more accurate. Even so, it's likely that many American buyers may bypass the .32 unit, and just get the .22 LR kit.

This consists of a slide, barrel, and magazine. The barrel uses the old "floating chamber" trick of the Colt Ace conversion, and this allows the employment of the same recoil spring as the .380 system.

When they are first installed, many

It has lighter recoil than the .380, and it is inherently more accurate. Even so, it's likely that many American buyers may bypass the .32 unit, and just get the .22 LR kit.

conversion units require minor adjustments before they function perfectly. On my sample P7K3, the .22 LR unit was put on the gun, and worked, from the start.

For the cartridges it uses, the P7K3 did not need the gas-locking system of its 9mm big brothers. Instead, it has a "brake system" that cushions the final rear-ward impact of the slide during recoil. This is an oil-filled hydraulic unit, and according the instruction manual, it can be replaced after several thousand rounds, when its projecting plunger no longer protrudes the right amount. A step on the barrel wrench is used as a gauge.

The P7K3 is just a little shorter than the 9mm P7 pistols and it is slightly flatter, but it has the same vertical measurement. The squeeze-cocking system works exactly the same. It also has the automatic internal firing pin block that is cleared only when the trigger is pulled for firing.

Another feature it shares with the larger guns is the ambidextrous magazine catch, which is pushed downward for release.

On the original .380/.32 slide of my sample gun, there is a fully-adjustable rear sight that seems to be made of a tough plastic material.

The .22 LR slide has a more solid









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rear sight that has a single top screw and only lateral adjustment. For the selfdefense or police back-up use of the centerfires. I think the solid sight would be preferable. The sight system is a threedot square-notch type, and luminous dots are an option.

As with all floating-chamber designs, the chamber recess in the .22 barrel will eventually require removal of the accumulated residue. A special tool is provided with the .22 unit for this, and the job is easily done.

For accuracy, a .32 will out-perform a .380, every time. And, the .32 is more pleasant to shoot.

For removing the residue from the outside of the chamber, the barrel wrench has a scraping hook that performs this operation neatly.

At the range, I tried the centerfires first, beginning with the original .380 barrel and magazine in place. The loads used were Remington FMJ, Winchester Silvertip HP, and a few rounds of Super-Vel JHP.

The Winchester and Remington loads were the most accurate, all grouping into the black of a standard pistol target at 25 yards. The group sizes were three to four inches, and all were well-centered. The hollowpoint loads gave no problems.

With the .32 barrel and magazine installed, and using Winchester Silvertip HP loads, I fired one group that measured 21/2 inches horizontally, and only 1/2 inch vertically. The shots were across the 10ring and X-ring, with one of the five rounds in the 9-ring.

For accuracy, a .32 will out-perform a .380, every time. And, the .32 is more pleasant to shoot.

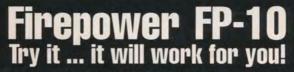
As noted earlier, the .22 LR unit went on the gun easily, and worked perfectly. I tried it with RWS target loads, CCI Stingers, and Federal Hi-Speed and Spitfire rounds. The others were all in the black, but there was some lateral dispersal.

The front sight of the .22 LR unit has a vertical rear face, while the one on the .380/.32 slide has a slight slant.

The trigger pull of my pistol is excellent: A clean-breaking four pounds, with a little take-up slack and about 1/16 of an inch over-travel.

The left grip has a thumb-rest that is not too obtrusive, but I could do without it, and left-handers would find it annoying. Fortunately, a plain left grip is available.

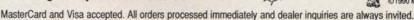
The squeeze-cocking lever was a little stiff at first, compared to the one on my well-broken-in P7, but it became a lot





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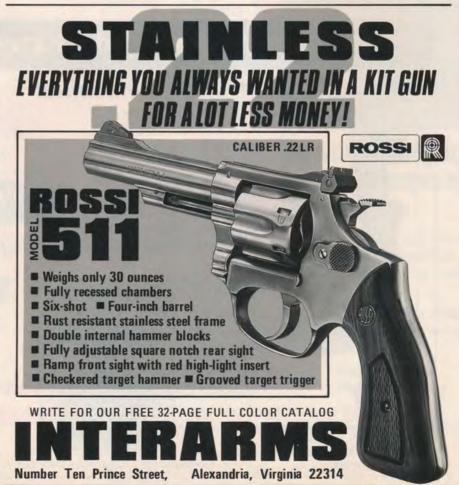
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smoother after some use.

When the magazine release is operated. the magazines are expelled smartly. As in the P7, the slide is held open by an internal catch after the last round. When a fresh magazine is inserted, squeezing the cocking lever releases the slide, leaving the P7K3 loaded, cocked, and ready to fire.

Altogether, like everything else from Heckler & Koch, it's a beautifully-engineered mechanism. The two things I don't care for - the fully-adjustable rear sight and thumb-rest on the grip- are easily corrected by available options.

For those who already have the P7. P7M8, or P7M13, the P7K3 will be a neat little counterpart gun. With the .22 LR unit installed, it allows a lot of low-cost practice, with exactly the same "feel" as the full nines. The pistol and its accessories are relatively expensive, but then, as I always say, quality costs.

Specifications

Weight: 28.17 oz Length: 6.40 inches Height: 5.00 inches **Barrel length:** 3.86 inches Sight radius: 5.56 inches **Magazine Capacity:** 8 rounds (all calibers)

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While nothing really replaces the attention to your individual shooting problems of personal coaching, not everyone is ready to invest the time, travel, and tuition costs to attend the Plaxco Academy.

Plaxco's 21/2 hour video, At The Beep, is the next best thing to being there. Filmed during an actual class at the Plaxco Academy near Roland, Ark., the video is in two parts. Volume I is the opening lecture in which Plaxco discusses guns, loads, holsters and related equipment, safety, and techniques.

In Volume II we go on the range with

Plaxco and his students; we stand at Plaxco's elbow as he coaches each student on the basics of stance, grip, hold, sight alignment and trigger control, then moves into the draw, speedloads, and different shooting positions.

There is a wealth of valuable information here, whether your objective is practical pistol competition or simply the ability to handle a pistol safely and competently.

Be warned that Plaxco's goal with this tape was to educate, not entertain. If what

I only wish this video had been available years ago when I first took up IPSC.

you want in a shooting video is exploding watermelons or pretty girls in bikinis firing automatic weapons, better look elsewhere. This is a textbook, not a comic book.

I only wish this video had been available years ago when I first took up IPSC competition, wasting time and money trying to learn by trial and error. Study this video, learn from it, and spend your time and ammunition on the range practicing the right techniques instead of teaching yourself bad habits.

Dave Anderson

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INSIDER

Continued from page 118

ammo. You can buy all the brass you like.

Meanwhile, the *Insider* sought to clarify the matter of the .356 TSW with Fed-

eral. If there's a new cartridge brewing, someone at Smith forgot to let Federal in on the secret!

"The what?" asked a thoroughly surprised Federal rep, "I've never heard of the .356 whatchamacallit."

Back to Smith went the *Insider*. What's the deal here, I asked, Federal says they haven't even heard of the .356 TSW.

It's in a preliminary stage of development, said a Smith spokesman. Only toplevel engineers at Federal are working on this, said Kevin Foley of S&W's engineering division. Actually, Foley admitted, S&W still hasn't provided Federal with the cartridge specifications yet.

All this .356 shenanigans is caused by the unilateral banning of the 9mm Luger cartridge from "major" power factor by the US representative of IPSC. The outlawing of the round was prompted by a fear that the 9x19 case (9mm Luger) is unsafe for major caliber handloads.

New data from Accurate Arms proves conclusively that the 9mm Luger can in fact be loaded to "make major" well within the safety limits established by SAAMI. (See *Speak Out* column.) All of which renders this whole .356 question moot.

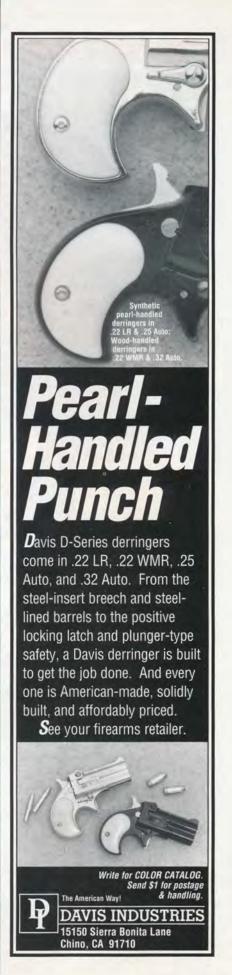
Might I suggest that what we have here is a classic example of the tail wagging the dog.

ur writers are not shills for the gun companies...but nor are they mouthpieces for the publisher! A byline is there to tell you that a story reflects the views and impressions of one man, the author.

Freedom of expression draws top writers to *Handgunner*, men like John Taffin, Nyle Leatham and Dave Anderson. We don't always agree with all our writers, but we support their right to tell it like it is!

Some of our stories are controversial, it's true. But each and every story in the *Handgunner* carries a byline and you will soon come to learn that our writers are each different and have their own styles and identities. Massad Ayoob, for example, can be quite caustic in his criticisms. J.D. Jones is not known for his tact or forbearance either!

Massad's style is that he usually starts out with the bad news, then ends on a positive note. For instance, in the last issue, Massad started by sarcastically poking fun at the RamLine .22 pistol and ended with "RamLine, forgive me for doubting you." By the way, this insider happens to know that Massad actually gave a RamLine .22 to his youngest daughter for her birthday!



CAMERON HOPKINS

AMT "ON-DUTY" PISTOL IS HOTTEST THING IN FIGHT FOR POLICE MARKET

espite a rather subdued atmosphere at the gun industry's biggest trade show of the year, there was a depressing feeling of optimism at the S.H.O.T. Show in January—"Things can't get much worse, so they must be getting better."

While nothing leaped out as The Hot New Thing this year like the .40 S&W cartridge did last year, it appeared that a new breed of "DA-only" pistols qualifies for a collective title of The Luke Warm New Thing.



The AMT "On Duty" in .40 5&W.

Of course if you're really on top of things like Harry Sanford at AMT, you'd capitalize on both with a DA-only .40 S&W! Harry wowed the folks with his new "On Duty" .40 S&W which had the slickest trigger pull of any of the trigger-cockers that I squeezed at the show.

The 32 oz. 14-shot "On Duty" features an aluminum frame, carbon fiber grips, inertia firing pin and that superb trigger which Harry humbly terms a "light let-off double action."

The pistol has a Colt-style thumb safety, even though a DA-only pistol doesn't need a safety, which is designed to give a policeman the upper hand against a gungrabber who will hopefully be fumbling with Harry's gun that only goes click instead of bang thanks to the "unnecessary" safety!

Another DA-only gun to debut was the **Browning** BDM (Browning Double Mode) which comes with a coin-operated selector switch on the frame with a little "P" and a little "R" that stand for "pistol" and "revolver." In pistol mode, the gun is a traditional double-action auto. In revolver mode, the gun is DA-only like a wheelgun.

The fact that the switch is slotted to be turned with a nickel or a quarter led American Hangunner's Dave Anderson to quip, "What if you turn it once more past 'P'? Do you get 'L' for Laundromat?"

The industry-wide plummet of gun sales has now hit **Sturm**, **Ruger & Co.** The Ruger plant in Southport laid off one-third of its workforce in January which a company spokesman attributed to "a decline in the single-action revolver market."

The good news is that **Colt** is bringing back the Woodsman! Colt is having this classic .22 pistol made by an outside vendor, like they did with the Italian-made Colt blackpowder guns a few years ago.

Let's hope that whomever Colt selects to build this beloved .22 pistol will live up to the fine legacy of the Woodsman.

Speaking of Colt, last issue I was in error in stating that Colt held a special 10% off sale. It was in fact a Colt distributor, not the factory.

Ruger president Gary French, former CEO of Colt's Firearms Division, was working at the Ruger booth on the S.H.O.T. Show's opening day of Thursday, but was gone on Friday.

No official reason was given by Ruger's PR office for Gary's abrupt departure. However, several weeks later Ruger announced that the new president is William B. Ruger, Jr.

Industry observer Dean Speir was the first to postulate that the smart money will be riding on Gary to take over the NRA as Executive Vice President, a post recently vacated by J. Warren Cassidy. Cassidy resigned in February.

One of the more enterprising businessmen in the shooting industry is Lew Horton whose name has become synonymous with limited edition runs of high-quality handguns that are marketed exclusively through his Massachusetts-based wholesaling company.

You may recall that **Lew Horton Distributing Co.** offered a stainless steel .38 Super **Colt** Government Model last year called the "El Presidente." This year Lew has the same thing except it's a Commander and it's called the "El Commandante."

Well, Lew really outdid himself when he successfully negotiated for a special run of from 300 to 500 each of five very special guns from the S&W Performance Center. Imagine that— immediate availability for the first time of first-class custom guns through a standard distribution channel!

What's even better news is the price. Check it out: The 686 Carry Comp, which incidentally was featured in our Jan/Feb issue, is listed by Lew Horton as retailing for \$999.95. This doesn't mean you won't pay more somewhere else. Watch out on this one.

A fully tricked-out compensated 4006 that Lew describes as having a "Barsto type barrel" (?), "spherical barrel bushing" and "master grade double action trigger job" is listed by Lew Horton as retailing for \$1,598.95. Lew Horton invites dealer orders from all you FFL holders, and he'll give you the absolutely best deal. Call or write: Lew Horton, P.O. Box 5023, Westboro MA 01581, 1-(800)-446-7866.

It's always interesting to read the shareholder's report from **Tompkins** which is the British multi-national conglomerate that owns **Smith & Wesson**.

Last time I scanned a 1989 Tompkins report I found that, oops!, they had inadvertently revealed S&W's closely guarded figures of market share (almost 20% of pistol sales in the US). This time I find another juicy morsel in the *Tompkins Interim Report* for the six months ending November, 1990:

"Smith & Wesson increased revolver sales but demand for pistols weakened in a highly competitive market. Manufacturing quality and efficiency continued to rise through further investment in computer controlled machine tools."

And the *Insider* has a fair idea of what exactly "weakened" Smith's pistol sales. The remarkable **Glock** pistol, the most innovative handgun in 50 years, continues to dominate the autopistol market through the sheer strength of its excellence.

Folks down in Smyrna, Ga., home of the Glock, claim that their share of "new police sales" has increased from 41% to 66%. It's reasonable to assume that Glock's share of the sporting market is at least somewhat similar.

Bravo for Glock for daring to break out of the status quo with a bold new gun.

What's all this about a new .356 cartridge? First we heard that Smith & Wesson was going to tame a wildcat called the .356 TSW, which was nothing more than a 9x21 cartridge loaded up to make major in IPSC matches. Team S&W member Brian Enos shot a .356 TSW (9x21 a.k.a. .356 JLE) last season.

But wait, at the S.H.O.T. Show S&W announced that a brand new cartridge is in the works from **Federal Cartridge** Co. called the... .356 TSW. However, *this* .356 TSW, as opposed to *that* .356 TSW, is based on a new case, the 9x22.

Just when you think you're beginning to get a handle on things, moving from thoroughly befuddled to merely confused, along comes the CP+P+9x21.

The CP+P+9x21 is a 9x21 case custom made for **CP Bullets** by **PMC**. John Ricco at CP Bullets said he ordered 1 million pieces of 9x21 brass, made to his specifications, but he will not sell loaded

Continued on page 117

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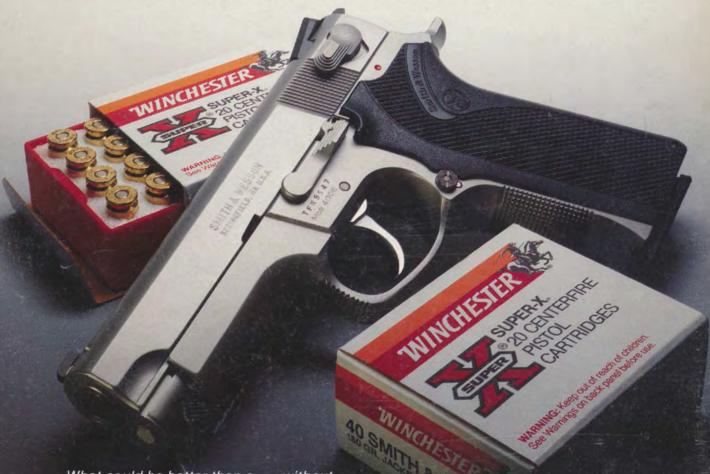


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