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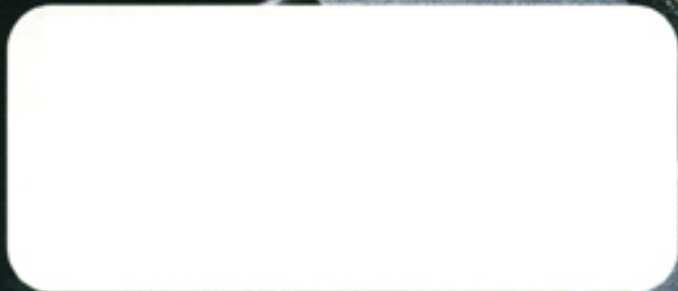
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On The Cover:
S&W Performance Center .45 CQB.
Strider combat knife.
Photo by Ichiro Nagata



FEATURES



44



62



48



COLUMNS

- 8 **SPEAK OUT**
- 16 **COP TALK** Massad Ayoob
- 19 **TACTICAL ADVANTAGE** Ken Hackathorn
- 20 **HANDGUN HUNTING** J.D. Jones
- 22 **HANDGUN LEATHER** Roy Huntington
- 24 **COMBAT SHOOTING** Dave Anderson
- 28 **HANDLOADING** Charles E. Petty
- 34 **PISTOLSMITHING** Alex Hamilton
- 36 **GUN RIGHTS** Jeffrey Snyder
- 45 **THE 10-RING** Commander Gilmore
- 91 **GUNNY SACK** Charles E. Petty
- 114 **INDUSTRY INSIDER** Cameron Hopkins

- 26 **BETTER SHOOTING** Dave Anderson
The power of work, the dedication of effort— keys to winning.
- 30 **THE COLTS THAT NEVER WERE** John Taffin
Cimarron Arms offers Cartridge Conversions that Colt should have made.
- 38 **THE AYOOB FILES** Massad Ayoob
Gun Grab: The Hit Man Incident.
- 40 **TAFFIN TESTS** John Taffin
The .475 Cooper is a more sensible bigbore alternative.
- 42 **THE SIXGUNNER** John Taffin
American Frontier Firearms and their replica sixguns.
- 43 **TRIAL BY FIRE** Massad Ayoob
An empirical test of point shooting and aimed fire with astonishing results.
- 44 **CLASSIC TEST REPORT: COLT 1849 POCKET** Mike Cumpston
The Baby Dragoon was the best carry gun of its day.
- 46 **RUGER'S LIGHT WORKING GUN** Mike Cumpston
Your basic plain vanilla .45 convertible Blackhawk is hard to beat.
- 48 **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER WORLD SHOOTOFF** Nyle Leatham
A dark horse races from the back of the pack to win the man-on-man shoot.
- 52 **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER CUSTOM GUN GIVEAWAY**
You can win a custom L-frame from Weigand Custom.
- 54 **SMITH & WESSON PERFORMANCE CENTER** Cameron Hopkins
Who are those guys? Why do they make such incredible handguns?
- 57 **THE .45 CQB** Cameron Hopkins
A serious fighting pistol from the S&W Performance Center.
- 60 **THE ETHICS OF FIVE GENERATIONS** Cameron Hopkins
The Dion family has worked at Smith & Wesson for 238 years!
- 61 **BOYCOTT THE BASTARDS** Cameron Hopkins
OK, so you hate S&W. Now what?
- 62 **COLLABORATIVE FOLDERS** Pat Covert
The combining of custom knifemaker designs with factory production methods.
- 64 **10-RING PRECISION** Mike Cumpston
Meet Alex Hamilton, a remarkable pistolsmith in more ways than one.
- 66 **HOME SAFETY AND SECURITY** Cameron Hopkins
What you need (and don't need) to safeguard your guns.
- 68 **HUMANOID TARGETS** Andy Stanford
Training for the real world requires realistic targets.
- 70 **MAN OF STEEL** Nyle Leatham
The King, Doug Koenig, wins the speed shooting championship.



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12 TIME 5.09
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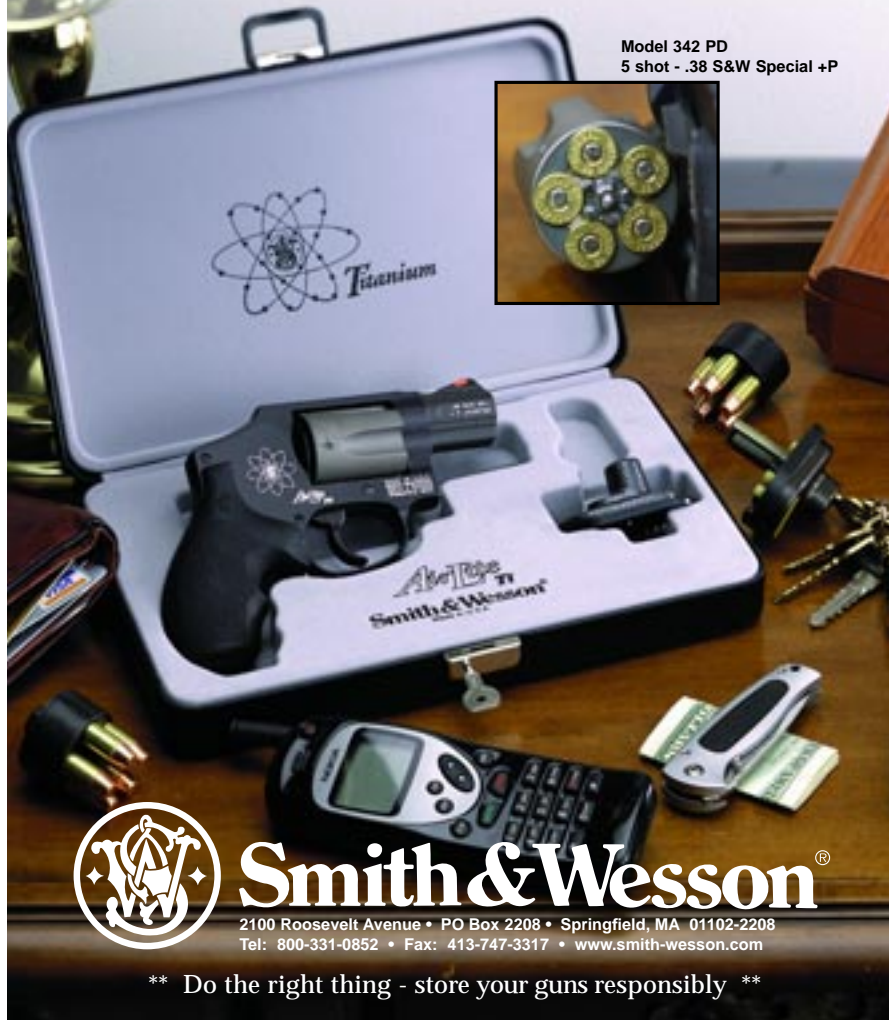
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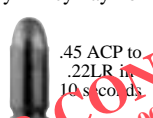
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Errors Galore

Hoo boy! What happened to your proofreaders and fact checkers for your Sept/Oct 2000 issue? What massive ignorant mistakes in the Kimber and .380 articles! Was everybody asleep?

You got the Kimber CDP size lineup bass-ackwards: It is supposed to be as shown in the full page Kimber ad on your own back cover of the very same issue. The Ultra is the smallest, the Compact is the mid-size, and the Pro has the full frame alloy grip with the 4" barrel. Your story had them all mixed up with the wrong names and sizes. We would expect these errors in *TIME*, but not from our gun experts at *American Handgunner*.

Your .380 SIG/PPK article— what a mess! First of all, your tested gun is not even a PPK, but rather the larger PPK/S as clearly marked on the slide in the photos. The article makes no mention of the difference between the PPK and the PPK/S and, other than the spec chart, it does not even cover the significant weight advantage of

the alloy SIG over the all-steel PPK/S.

You then left out any mention of the Beretta M85 .380, which directly competes with the Sig/PPK. There was no

discussion of how the 232 is really just a pricey regression of the original 230 with no actual improvements to justify its increased cost.

Why no discussing the rather sharp recoil of the SIG/PPK unlocked blow-back design compared to the locked-breech .380s?

Then, finally, that totally wrong information on the mag releases! It is well known that the PPK mag release is on the frame in 1911-style as clearly shown in your photos and that the SIG mag release is the European heel-style. Yet, your caption plainly states, "A standard Browning-style mag release (far left) is more familiar to U.S. shooters than the PPK's heel release." Your PPK has no heel release!

What your caption mistakenly refers to in the SIG photo is actually the SIG's decocker as the SIG's mag release is clearly in the heel.

What a totally dumb, amateurish article, and certainly not up to your usual standards



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of factual expertise. Please get back to publishing the highest quality handgun magazine on the market as soon as possible.

David Abujosh
Miami Beach, Fla.

What a disaster! You're right, we totally blew it on both of those stories. There are reasons and there are excuses, but we'll offer neither. We screwed up. We'll do better next time. Editor

High On Hi-Powers

As a lover, owner and sometimes carrier of a Kimber .45 and a Browning Hi-Power, I personally enjoy every article about my favorite pistol.

I first picked up a single-action Browning almost 25 years ago on a weekend camping trip and have owned and used several different styles and makes of John Browning's creations in the years since.

Like many, I have been advised by well-meaning, but uneducated, friends to the fact that my gun was "dangerously" cocked or in the firing position. I have tried through the years to research any shooting accidents concerning the 1911 and discover what the real reason was behind each incident.

It has been my experience that in almost every instance the fault was with the person handling the weapon— even when police officers were involved. Most accidents could be blamed on unfamiliarity with the weapon, but when this was not the case, most of the others were the fault of the owner of the weapon who for some reason decided that he could build a better single-action than Mr. Browning and in tweaking the action, they disabled one or more of the safety features.

Maybe this would be a good time for you to have one of the writers research single-action accidents and give us readers the real scoop. Whatever, you keep writing about whatever you want to and I'll keep buying the magazine, it's my favorite.

Jere Smith

College Station, Texas

We agree. Most bathtub accidents are caused by slipping. Most gun accidents are caused by improper handling. Editor

Holding Court

Jeff Snyder's article on the Supreme Court and the Second Amendment ("Gun Rights," Sept/Oct '00) was absolutely, positively superb and easily the best article I have ever read on the subject. Period.

It is comforting to know that the Supreme Court can only affirm what is my God-given right and is acting unconstitutionally when ruling in any other fashion.

Snyder's article should be mandatory reading for all gun owners. It is simply that important. Now, if we could only get

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M. Humphries
Anniston, Ala.

Ignoramus Gun

I have to laugh at the ignoramuses who complain about the good old Model 1911 government .45 ACP. First, it's not unreliable. I've found that some poorly designed magazines with weak springs may cause malfunctioning, but with good magazines, my old .45 works well, even with the hollowpoint ammo.

Learn to field strip, clean and lubricate the .45, especially if you use it for self-defense. This doesn't have to be done if only a few rounds are fired, but I do it every couple of hundred shots. If only a few shots are fired, I swab out the barrel with bore cleaner and wipe off the bolt face without field stripping.

Replace the recoil spring if this hasn't been done; it's probably old and weak. I use a heavy-duty 22 lb. Wolff spring for +P loads and recoil buffers.

The M1911 isn't unsafe; most firearms are about as safe as the person handling them. I don't carry the .45 "cocked and locked," like some people advise. I suspect the people who have them go off when bumped are using the "cocked and locked" method, if these anecdotes are true. I find them difficult to believe.

Finally, the .45, especially with 185 or 200 gr. hollowpoints in +P loadings is a formidable weapon that nevertheless is not overly difficult to control, for an experienced handgunner. It certainly puts the 9mm to shame.

Howard Jubatum
Missoula, Mont.

The Ultimate Heavy Duty

Roy Huntington's article on the S&W "Ultimate Outdoorsman" (Nov/Dec '00) looks like a Heavy Duty model. The Outdoorsman had target sights. This one is the fixed-sight service version of the old .38/44. What happened that both the editor and a presumably competent writer let this one get by you? Been obsessing too much over the 1911 in all its myriad forms, which takes up all too much space in every gun magazine on the market?

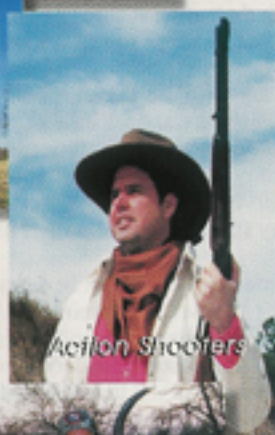
Jim Williamson
Dallas, Texas

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SAFETY, SAFETY, SAFETY

When you're a cop responding to a danger scene, you know that there's at least one loaded handgun present: yours. For a long time, it was a fact of life that one out of every five murdered police officers was killed with a snatched police service weapon, usually his own. In some places, it was worse. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department had one string of 11 cop-killings where roughly half the deputies were slain with their own service revolvers. This led that department to adopt the Beretta 92F pistol, a 16 shot 9mm.

The LASD has been very happy with the Beretta. This isn't just because of its superb reliability and its ease of shooting. It's because the Beretta has a manual safety catch. By the mid-1990s, LASD Academy staff was able to point to at least four deputies who had survived murder attempts after someone got their gun away from them and pulled its trigger on them.

Because the pistols were on safe, they could not be immediately fired by anyone who didn't "know the combination."

The LASD chose to go from the excellent 115 gr. Federal 9BP jacketed hollowpoint to a 147 gr. subsonic load. Nature took its course. The deputies discovered in the field that, when loaded with low-velocity hollowpoints, the 9mm was the impotent manstopper that Jeff Cooper had warned them about.

A cry went up from the field for .45s. A year or two ago, this plea was answered by the new high sheriff, who authorized the L.A. County deputies to buy their own good quality double-action first-shot .45 auto pistols for duty, so long as they could be carried on safe. I, for one, think it was a smart move.



Photo By Ichiro Nagata

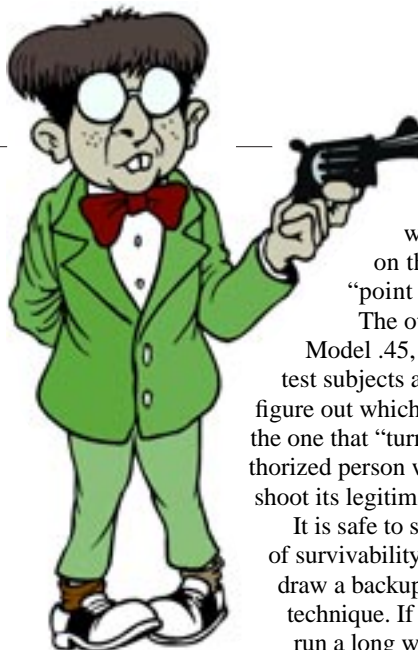
The Beretta's safety has saved at least four LASD deputies during gun take-aways.

THE GOMER PYLE TEST

To my knowledge, the first study of the "proprietary nature to the user factor" of a semiautomatic pistol with a safety catch was conducted in the early 1980s and published in *Police Chief*, the journal of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Non-sworn police personnel (secretaries, janitors and the like) were drafted for the test.

They were taken to the police department shooting range and given the hypothetical situation that they were a cop-killer, and they had just taken an officer's gun and wanted to shoot him with it. The gun was set on the table in front of them, a scant few feet from a silhouette target representing the disarmed officer. Each test subject picked up the gun and "shot the cop" under time. Two handguns were used in the experiment.

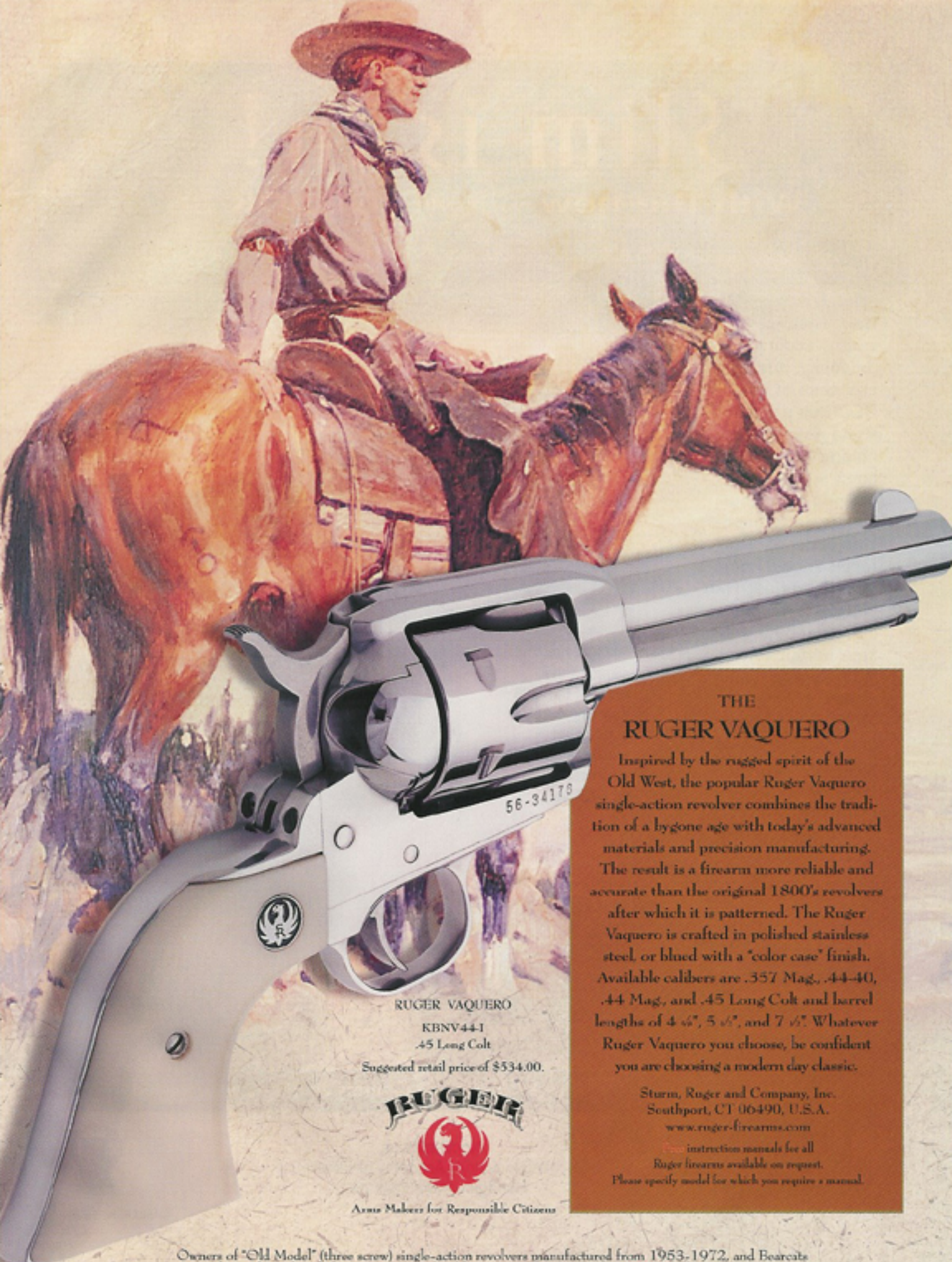
One was the Smith & Wesson double-action .38 Spe-



cial revolver the agency was issuing at the time. It took, on the average, 1.2 seconds to "point gun, pull trigger."

The other gun was a Colt Government Model .45, cocked and locked. It took the test subjects an average of over 16 seconds to figure out which lever or button on the gun was the one that "turned it on" and allowed the unauthorized person who had snatched the pistol to shoot its legitimate owner.

It is safe to say that 16 seconds is a window of survivability. In that time frame, you can draw a backup weapon or perform a disarming technique. If nothing else, you can run a long way in that much time. *



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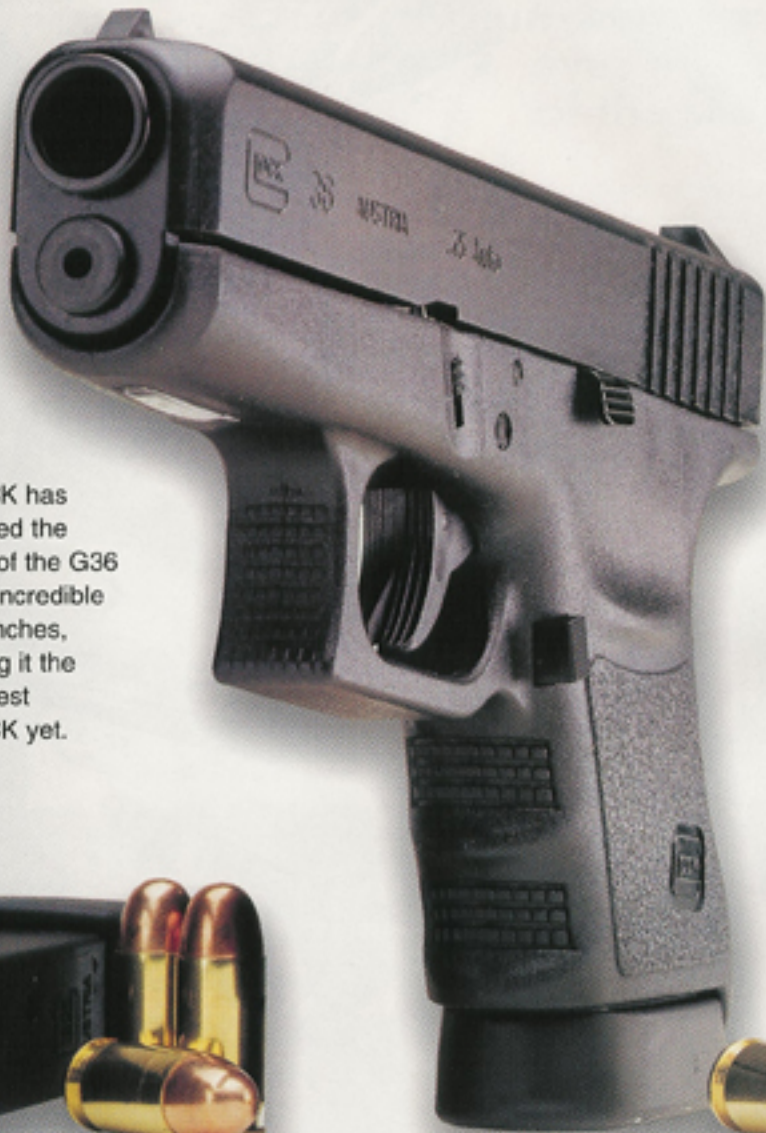
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A Sheep In Sheep's Clothing

One of the great virtues of a handgun is that it provides the user with the ability to defend himself from a violent attack. Even if the attackers are physically stronger, attack in packs or have lethal weapons in their possession, a handgun is a versatile and effective defense.

Sam Colt got this rumor started when he told us that a handgun makes the meek equal to the strong. It is just this sort of image that convinces a great many people to buy a handgun for self-protection. In fact, I would argue that most of the handguns sold in America went across gun shop counters with this idea in mind.

When I teach a self-defense/tactical handgun class, one of the first points I make is that the world is divided between predators and prey, with the grasseaters far outnumbering the carnivores. In our watered down, compassionate conservative sort of "civilized world," we are encouraged by society to be passive and not to resist when we are preyed upon. Most, if not all, police departments will advise you to hand over your wallet if you are mugged and "don't do anything stupid."

Behave yourself, don't cause trouble, don't be hostile to others, avoid conflict, never get into a fight. If threatened, walk or run away from danger. Don't defend yourself, someone might get hurt. Leave the fighting to the police.

What does this mean to you, the average reader of *American Handgunner*? First and foremost, just owning a fancy blaster with the best hollowpoint ammo available does not make you safe. You must be skilled with a sidearm to be effective.

If you are not mentally switched on, you may still become a victim because you did not respond to a threat effectively. Anyone who has faced a life-threatening attack can tell you that it has a very noticeable effect on your physical and physiological being.



Under life-threatening stress you will suffer from some very real and disturbing issues. Stress of this type will cause a very rapid increase in blood pressure; your heart rate will rapidly increase to 140 beats per minute or higher. Fine motor skills will deteriorate almost instantly, making the precision of gun handling and manipulation difficult.

Your vision will become more acute, making "tunnel vision" a real source of concern. Your hearing will do weird things, distorting the perception of sound, perhaps even experiencing a form of temporary deafness called "auditory exclusion."

Finally, under life-threatening stress, you will rarely attempt any task that you do not have total confidence in your reflexive ability to perform well. So, think about the facts of how well you have prepared to use your handgun as a self-defense tool. A violent fight is not an IPSC match, and the stakes are higher than first pick at the prize table.

REPETITION: *The Mother Of All Skill*

Understand that under stress the conscious mind does not work well. Only the subconscious mind can perform properly, because it is the non-analytical mind that is influenced through training. It is the subconscious mind that is capable of instantaneously performing a "hard wired" technique that you have ingrained into yourself with countless repetitions.

You will fight as you train, so how you train is massively important. If your training has been unrealistic, driven by range safety and allowed you to always shoot and perform in your "comfort zone," don't be surprised to find your pants warm and soggy when you're actually faced with life-threatening stress.

HUMAN OPERATING SYSTEM, NON-UPGRADED

Police firearms training is, for the most part, driven to insure that police officers can fire an acceptable qualification score. How well this training relates to their ability to survive and fight with their sidearm is of little concern, because the training rarely has anything to do with fighting with a handgun.

Note that the U.S. statistics concerning police handgun usage show that most officers miss with 75 to 80 percent of the shots they fire in lethal force encounters. As long we continue to train people to shoot 70 percent on quals, things are not going to improve much.

Traditional firearms training is simply target practice. Shooting tight groups has little to do with your chances of survival.

You must be able to draw, fire and manipulate your sidearm *reflexively*. If you have to consciously think about any of these factors, you are doomed.

Why do so many police officers miss? Simply because they are not taught to use their sidearms reflexively. There are a variety of reasons why this is not the case, but the fact is that it is not a priority, and never will be.

If your handgun presentation, rapid indexing on the target, flash sight picture and compressed surprise break are not aspects of your firing technique that are programmed into your subconscious, hardwired into your operating system, you will very likely fall apart in a dither of uncertainty and a fumbled draw.



IRON, DOT OR SCOPE

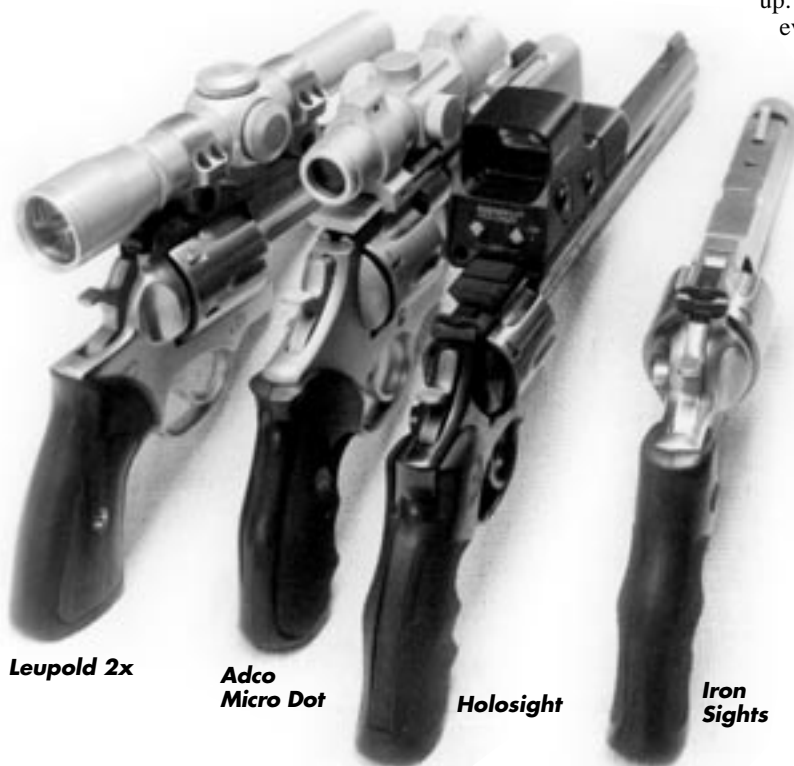
Sights, in some form or another, adorn almost all handguns. Hunting handguns usually come with iron sights of varying configuration and quality while others, such as many of the single-shots, do not have any sights, but are drilled and tapped for the shooter's scope of choice.

The typical sight found on most good hunting revolvers consists of a square-notch, adjustable rear combined with a front post which appears square-topped in the sight picture. Some have various colored inserts, and this type of sight is generally the most accurate iron sight configuration, in my opinion.

The shallow V-notch rear, sometimes called an express sight, combined with a gold bead front, is not as accurate as a notch-and-post. The gold, or McGivern, bead is much more difficult to align precisely, and it is more sensitive than a plain post to sight picture distortion from directional light changes that affect its point-of-impact.

On the other hand, the gold bead and V-notch rear combo is generally easier to pick up in poor light and possesses good enough accuracy for most woods hunting.

Iron sights found on the single shots tend to have smaller notches and narrower front sights than those found on revolvers, which allow slightly more precise shot placement. New on the scene are fiber optic front sights of varying colors and intensities. Remember, the intensity goes down as the light fades.

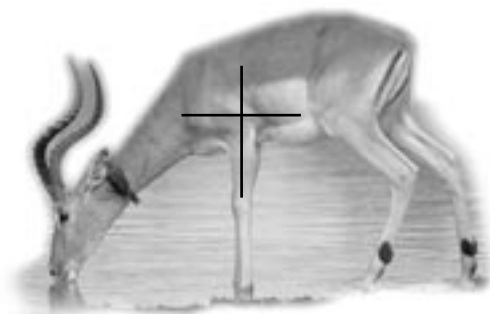


Leupold 2x

Adco
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Hubbell Notwithstanding, Scopes Are Good

Telescopic sights do the same thing for handguns as they do for rifles—allow more precise shot placement than either iron or dot sights. Instead of simply shooting at the body of an animal, you should be shooting at a particular spot, as determined by the angle presented by the animal. A scope facilitates such precise aiming by magnifying the target and, at the same time, presenting the aiming reference, the crosshair, on the same plane.

Perhaps the easiest scope to employ is the practically bullet-proof Leupold 2x. Many shooters learning to use a scoped pistol make the mistake of closing one eye and looking through the scope tube while wildly waving it around, trying to find the target.

The proper way to use a scope is just like iron sights—keep both eyes open and look at the target while placing the sight in front of you. The reticle is automatically placed on the target. When it is in the right place, shoot.

Don't keep trying to make the scope "hold still," because it never will. Get the shot off as quickly as you can get it lined up. Many shooters become proficient using this method, even for aerial shooting.

Higher-powered scopes are useful for load testing and on the longer-ranged single-shots. I seldom use more than a 4x on a revolver or a single-shot for big game hunting. When I go higher in power, it is usually with a variable and I normally carry them on 2x or 4x.

Scopes will also tell you when not to shoot. What looks like a perfect iron sight shot may hide many bullet-deflecting twigs you would not willingly choose to shoot through.

DOT THE EYES

Faster and more accurate than iron sights are the "red dot" sights. The Bushnell Holosight exemplifies one type, and the Micro Dot, the other. The Holosight has an upright "screen" and the Micro Dot sports a conventional tube. Some shooters prefer the screen, saying it's quicker. Others prefer the dot.

Both types are adjustable for intensity of the dot for varying light conditions. Set too bright, it's possible to make the target virtually invisible behind the dot in poor light. Reducing intensity of the dot makes the dot sight an extremely good short-range, low-light sight.



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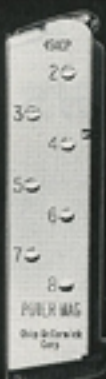


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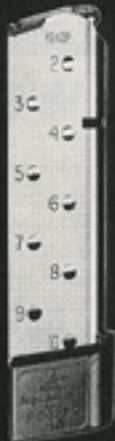
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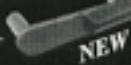
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All edges are beveled. Correct pin size for improved accuracy.

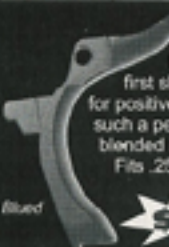
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NEW

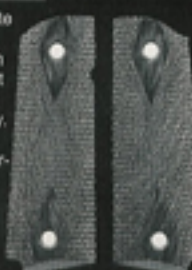
"Slim Carry" rosewood grips are 40% narrower than standard 1911 grips. An obvious enhancement for concealed carry pistols. More than ever, 1911 manufacturers are making their pistols shorter in length and height. "Slim Carry" grips are narrower, which makes 1911 pistols more concealable and comfortable to carry while still offering a secure grip. Same features, quality, & beauty as standard CMC rosewood grips. Special screws and bushings are included for reliable attachment. For: Gov't, Cmdr, & Officers/Compacts.



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LASERS, HOLSTERS AND LOOSE WOMEN

Okay, so this doesn't have anything to do with loose women, but I got you to read on. With the rising popularity of laser sighting systems on handguns I've encountered some timely questions— I might add even well thought-out questions— about what to do when you screw a laser onto your handgun.

Here's the scoop. If it's a duty handgun, as in police work, all is well unless it's a module that hangs on the bottom of your handgun on those fancy rails they are building-in these days. Your options are severely limited to a handful of offerings from Safariland, Blackhawk, Eagle and Bianchi's Cobra Tactical, along with some onesies from some small shops.

If you were smart, like in real smart, however, you would get a laser from Crimson Trace or Laser Max that doesn't impact the holster decision at all. Crimson Trace's invention replaces the grip on a handgun and I have yet to find a holster that was bothered by the addition. Take the old grips off, put the Crimson Trace on and stuff old slab-sides back into the same holster.

Ditto for Laser Max. Their model replaces the recoil spring guide rod so it deftly defies holster problems. Which one is best for you is your own problem to contend with, but neither will make a new holster purchase a future consideration.



AND ANOTHER THING

I'm only going to say this once. Holster makers put belt loops on their holsters that handle 1½" to 1¾" belts for a reason. You shouldn't— no, you *can't*— put a pound and a half of gun into an 8 oz. holster and then expect a skinny Antonio De Esmeralda designer belt of genuine, rare, limp, gopher skin leather to hold the whole thing up and keep your drawers from going south.

Lots of perfectly good holsters get labeled dog poo simply because the belt isn't up to snuff.

May I not mention this again please? If I have to, it will be all capital letters and have words that look like this in it— !@#*&?%! . Remember, I'm not being cranky, just telling it like it is.

A Winter Wonderland Of Holsters



Rusty Sherrick's advertisement, a humble black and white affair, appeared seemingly out of nowhere in another gun magazine. I wasn't actually *reading* the magazine, but was tearing the pages out to catch the oil dripping from my aging 1940 Packard when the ad happened to catch my near-sighted eye. That's my good eye.

It simply said, "C. Rusty Sherrick, Custom Leather Work" and had a photo of a most handsome holster. I was intrigued by the understatement and phoned to find out more.

Rusty turned out to be a personable fellow who loved to work horsehide into trusty tools to tote handguns. I immediately liked him and said I was interested in a couple of designs on his easy-to-manage website.

Forthwith, arrived at my door something called a "Gochenour Hi Ride" and a pocket holster with no name that I could discern. I changed my Officer's ACP from its summer fanny pack to the hide of horse herewith.

The Gochenour Hi Ride is a simple and not-so-simple scabbard that has a metal band to tension the "hold" on the gun. Bend it tighter and the gun stays put, loosen it and you're suddenly raising eyebrows at the next IDPA match with your demonstrations of speed during sonic-boom-inducing draws from concealment.

I liked this holster lots and I haven't said that about too many, that I can recall. It rides very high to enable you to keep Mr. Officer's ACP— or Mr. Tiny's Glock or Mr. Moon's Kahr or whatever— handily concealed under a sweater or Hawaiian shirt. (Okay, I live in California, be patient).

Workmanship is damn nice and the color is pretty too. I firmly believe this will rapidly become my "winter" holster and I can't make a better endorsement than that. I won't/don't wear anything if it's trash and could get me killed. This one from Rusty is in neither category. Look for an interesting brassiere holster from him in my next column. That is, if his wife lets him take the photo.



Please don't tear up this magazine to catch oil spills. Instead, contact Rusty Sherrick and request more info on his Concealed Carry and Historical Reproductions at 507 Mark Drive, Dept. AH, Elizabethtown, PA 17022; phone: (717) 361-7699; website: www.c-rusty.com.

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SQUARE DEAL 'B'

RL 550B

XL 650

RL 1050

SL 900



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\$325⁹⁵



\$443⁹⁵



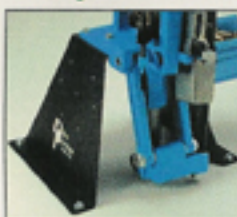
\$1199⁹⁵



\$819⁹⁵

Please Note: All loading machines are pictured with optional accessories.

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SSO A04-22051 33.95
650 A04-22051 27.95

Organize Your Bench With Toothhead Stands

This all-metal stand provides a place to store your caliber conversions. Available individually or in packages of three. Comes packaged with data labels. Each A04-22055 \$10.95
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This Accessory Roller Handle greatly reduces fatigue during long reloading sessions and makes primer seating easier. Adding this handle and a set of Strong Mounts to your machine duplicates the feel of a classic \$3000 Dillon RL 1000!
Plastic Roller A04-22183 \$25.95
Aluminum Roller A04-17950 31.95

Bullet Trays Designed for Economy of Motion

Works on the Square Deal 'B', the RL 550B and the XL 650 when equipped with Strong Mounts, and a separate kit is available for the RL 1050.
Tray Kit A04-22214 \$27.95
RL 1050 Kit A04-22215 27.95



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.357 SIG	A04-22083	103.95

Dillon Rifle Dies (Three-Die Sets)

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270 Winchester	A04-22013	49.95
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7.62x39	A04-21681	49.95
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Dillon's HP1 Electronic Hearing Protector amplifies weak sounds while at the same time blocking out loud, harmful noise. During loud noises the HP1 maintains a comfortable level of sound transmission. NRR 21 protection rating.
HP1, Blue A04-10157 \$135.00
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Save \$15 on Dillon's Case Prep Package Deal



A \$137.95 value if purchased separately - for only \$122.95 from Dillon Precision. The Package Deal includes: CV-500 Cartridge Case Cleaner, CM-500 Case/Media Separator, 8-oz. bottle of Rapid Polish 290, and 10 lbs. Corn Cob Polishing media.
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'Dillon Leather' Means 'Practical Holsters'

Dillon Precision offers an affordable line of handgun leather with seven holster styles that fit most popular carry guns. Magazine pouches, revolver ammo pouches and gunbelts are also available. The holster featured here is our C.Y.A., a small-of-the-back style concealed carry holster.



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"D-Terminator" Electronic Scale A04-13681 \$166.95
"Eliminator" Balance Beam Scale A04-13480 48.95

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The first "coffee-table" book about the fast-growing sport of Cowboy Action Shooting, written by Gary Kiehl, with photos by Nyle Leatham, and published by Dillon Precision. This 160-page, case-bound masterpiece is absolutely beautiful. Order your copy today!



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The Basic Black Holster

Galco's "Cop 3 Slot" is a versatile and attractive concealment holster. Three 1¼" belt slots allow the holster to be worn in either the strong side or cross draw positions. Gun retention is provided by both a thumb-break safety strap and by an adjustable tension screw. Current price is a very reasonable \$49.95.

How did Galco keep the price down? Not by cutting quality, but by limiting the number of options. The Cop 3 Slot is available for right-hand use only, for a limited number of models and, like Henry's Model T, is available in any color you like as long as it's black.

Currently the 3 Slot is available for the Beretta 92, most Glock and SIG pistols, and the S&W 5906 and 4006. The sample tested, for a Glock 26 with Optima sight, proved both comfortable and concealable. Quality of materials and workmanship was first-rate.

For more information contact Galco International, Dept. AH, 2019 Quail Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85027; phone: (602) 258-8295.



Galco "Cop 3 Slot" for Glock 26/27.

The Do-Everything Holster

A police detective friend who's been wearing a Safariland Model 560 "Custom Fit" holster on duty for over a year claims it's the best holster he's ever used. The paddle system is extremely comfortable even after long hours on the job, retains the holster safely, yet is easy to install and remove. Draws are smooth and consistent. The holster conceals well, even under a light summer jacket.

The 560 is another ingenious concept from holster designer Bill Rogers. It is constructed of a special non-stretching synthetic, so once tension is set, it remains set indefinitely. This officer shoots a lot, both for qualification and for recreation, so the holster has seen a lot of use. It still looks like new and tension has not changed from its initial adjustment.

The holster is fitted to specific gun models, in this case a Glock 26, via a screw on the rear of the holster. Operation is rather like an automobile floor jack. Turning the screw presses a plastic lever against the gun's receiver, tightening the holster. Two adjustment screws on the front of the holster permit gun retention to be fine-tuned. Clever, simple and effective.

Models are available to fit most modern handguns, in both left and right hand. If you don't care for the paddle, it can be replaced by a belt loop (supplied). Current list price is \$83. Safariland can be reached at Dept. AH, 3120 E. Mission Blvd., Ontario, CA 91761; phone: (909) 923-7300.



THE GRIP, PLUS ONE

Compact, lightweight autopistols with their short grip frames are not the easiest to control. An inexpensive remedy is the finger groove panel offered by Pearce Grip, Inc. The finger grooves have extensions on each side to fit over the stock screw bushings and are held in place by the grip panels. The finger grooves retail for \$11. Pearce grip panels list at \$14.50, or the combination which Pearce calls its "Modular Grip System" lists at \$24.



Pearce finger groove grip.

Installation on a Springfield Compact was simple and the system provided a secure, comfortable grip. Control is definitely enhanced over the standard smooth frontstrap. The system is also available for full-size 1911s and for all models of Para-Ordnance.

Pearce "Plus One" magazine extensions for Glock 27/33 model pistols provide a very comfortable grip while bringing magazine capacity to the legal limit of 10 rounds. Grip extensions are also offered for Kahr and Para-Ordnance magazines.

Pearce Grip can be found at Dept. AH, P.O. Box 40367, Fort Worth, TX 76140; phone: (800) 390-9420.

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SHOOTING FOR THE AMERICAN WORK ETHIC

Average ability and hard work will beat exceptional skill and slovenly work every time. Hard work, dedication and commitment can make up for a multitude of physical shortcomings. In a John Steinbeck novel, two characters engage in the nature vs. nurture argument. One character says, "You can't make a racehorse out of a pig." The other replies, "No, but you can make a very fast pig."

Time and again I hear people say they could be good shooters if they had more talent, if they could afford better equipment, if they had more ammunition for practice. Actually they could become very good shooters if they stopped making excuses and instead made a commitment to improve.

Good athletic abilities, especially hand-eye coordination, are a plus, no doubt about it. However, if your athletic abilities are just average, it doesn't mean you can't become an excellent shooter. It simply means you're going to have to work a little harder.

As for cost, shooting does not have to be expensive. Most of the physical skills can be acquired by dry firing. The real cost is measured in time, not dollars. You and I have exactly as many hours in a day as Jerry Barnhart.

I'll go so far as to say that unlimited access to ammunition can be as much a handicap as a help. High volume reloading tools and bulk purchasing of components can bring per-round costs down. I'm all for that as long as it doesn't lead to undisciplined practice.

The key element in becoming a good shot is neither the gun nor the ammunition. It's not a question of height or weight, sharp vision or bruising strength. The key element is deciding that shooting expertly is a goal you want to pursue and committing yourself to meeting that objective.



Grip strength can be improved by wadding up the newspaper with one hand. Newspaper...newspaper...not American Handgunner.

ONE, TWO, THREE... LIFT!

The two fundamentals of accurate shooting are to hold the gun as motionless as possible and to hold it the same way for every shot. Strong, well-toned arm and hand muscles are a definite asset.

One of the most effective exercise devices is simple to make and use. Get a section of 1" wooden dowel about 18" long and attach a three-foot cord to its center. Attach a weight to the other end. Now simply grasp the dowel with both hands, hold it out at arm's length and alternately wind and unwind the cord. Repeat the cycle 10 times.

Adjust the amount of the weight to suit your strength level. You should be able to complete 10 reps, but you should feel you are really working on the last few. Top competitor John Pride uses this exercise and his records in PPC and Bianchi Cup speak for themselves.

An even cheaper exercise device is

one you likely throw away every day, your daily newspaper. Take the sheets of newspaper one at a time, and using just one hand, crumple them into a ball as quickly as possible. Repeat this until the muscles become too fatigued to continue. Baseball star Ken Griffey Jr. and golfer Tiger Woods both use this exercise.

For years I carried either a small sponge ball or a spring-loaded hand squeezer in my vehicles. In light traffic where I felt comfortable driving with one hand, I'd alternate 50 squeezes with each hand.

To strengthen forearm muscles, take a dumbbell and sit down with your forearm resting on your thigh, the weight extended just over the knee, palm down. Now raise and lower the weight by flexing the wrist. After three sets of 10 repetitions, turn the hand over (palm up) and repeat. Do this with both arms. As always, once it becomes too easy, increase the weight.



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There are two company mottoes at Emerson Knives. One is: **"To Some They Are Accessories, To Others They Are Necessities."**™ When your customers are individuals whose lives depend on the quality of the gear they carry, it creates an awesome responsibility. Some companies shrink from it, some companies ignore it, but the best companies thrive on it.

Emerson Knives is one such company. Our knives are deployed with the most elite military and law enforcement organizations in the world. They are the most sought after and depended on by the world's greatest adventurers, waterman and outdoorsmen.

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Every time you use an Emerson knife, count yourself in the select company of those individuals who will never compromise and can never, ever settle for second best.

They will not let you down. They will not fail you. I will not allow it.

Ernest R. Emerson, President - Emerson Knives, Inc.



Brass Maker To The Stars

Starline, the maker of high-quality reloading brass, has continued to expand its offerings to focus on some nearly obsolete calibers that had been lost in the mists of time.

For decades, Starline's very existence was known only in the inner circles of the ammo business. But the brass business is what might be termed incestuous and it isn't rare for one of the "majors" to make brass for another. It's simply a matter of capacity and demand, and all the big ammo makers know that it's a matter of one hand washing another.

Starline created a neat little niche by making brass to help meet high demand peaks in the production cycle for one of the biggies. Big enough to make large runs, Starline is still small enough to be nimble, and the company also specialized in producing relatively small runs of fringe calibers that were not large enough for the big boys to gear up.

Starline is well equipped to make small runs—between 100,000 and 1 million pieces—that aren't economical for the majors, who tend to think in much larger numbers. Starline can crank out the cases with the appropriate headstamp and send them to one of the biggies for stuffing. Who knew?

Soon Starline emerged from out of the OEM shroud. The first actual piece of brass I saw bearing the distinctive headstamp was on some brass that Federal loaded for the FBI's early experiments with the 10mm. Today Starline's list shows about 50 cartridges ranging from the .380 ACP to the .454 Cassul. They also



Starline brass in, L to R, .32-20, .38-40 and .44-40.

make some great .45-70 brass.

But it is Starline's willingness to make brass for obsolete or low volume calibers that earns my accolades. Many shooters have rediscovered the "dash cartridges" for cowboy shooting—.32-20, .38-40, .44-40 and .45-70. Brass for the likes of the .44 Russian and .45 Schofield are now being produced, cases that many of us have only seen in books.

For more information contact Starline Brass, P.O. Box 833, Sedalia, MO 65301; phone: (800) 280-6660; website: www.starlinebrass.com

How To Adjust A Crimp Die

Since most of the loading I do with Starline brass involves old cartridges and cast bullets, getting a good crimp is an issue. Fortunately, almost all the bullets we use have a built-in guide called the crimp groove. Usually this is a great spot to crimp, although some lever action rifles may need a different OAL to feed well.

There are several different methods for adjusting seat/crimp dies in the loading manuals; however, the method I suggest differs slightly. It's something that seems to work best for me and has evolved over a long time.

The first step is to put a case that has been sized and expanded into the shell holder and raise the ram to the top. Then begin to screw the seating die down until you feel the die touch the case mouth. At this point, gradually lower the die one turn at a time—moving the ram up and down as needed—until the case mouth just touches the crimp ring, but does not apply any crimp.

Go slowly and don't go any further than that. Screw the die's lock ring down until it touches the top of the press. Do not tighten any further

and leave the set screw loose.

Now, unscrew the seating stem until it's up all the way. Insert a case with a bullet properly centered and raise the ram. Then, screw the seating stem down until you feel it touch the bullet. Lower the ram a bit and screw the seating stem down three or four turns. This will begin to seat the bullet.

Continue this in small increments until the case mouth is about in the middle of the crimp groove of the bullet. When you get there, tighten the lock ring on the seating stem.

Now, loosen the lock ring on the die body and screw the die down about an eighth of a turn. This will start the crimp and may be enough, but if not, screw it down a tad more. Usually you'll get the right crimp with no more than a quarter turn.

You'll also see that the bullet is seated a bit more. Do this in small steps until the bullet is seated correctly and you've got the desired crimp. At that point, leave the ram up with the cartridge in place and screw the die lock ring down snug and tighten the set screw. Also, check that the seating stem hasn't loosened up. The whole process takes much longer to describe than to accomplish.



Case mouth is expanded just enough to let a bullet start; bullet seated properly in relation to crimp groove; bullet seated and crimp applied.

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Cimarron's Open-Top is available in .38 Special, .38 LC, .44 Colt, .44 Russian and .45 Schofield.

THE COLTS THAT NEVER WERE

Thanks To Cimarron Arms, Several Classic Sixguns From The 1870 To 1890 Period Are Now Faithfully Recreated.

By John Taffin

Replica sixguns are very popular today with both the percussion Colts and the Single Action Army being faithfully offered in the original designs. Because of various reasons, including the calibers they were originally chambered for, there are also several other models that are modernized versions of the old Colts. These include the Cartridge Conversions, the Open-Top, the Lightning and Thunderer. All of these in their original form were important parts of the period from 1870 to 1890.

Today, for Western reenactors, history buffs or cowboy shooters these guns are offered in a much more usable form that can be described as the "Colts That Never Were." This is not to disparage them as the new versions are better in many respects than the old originals.

Thanks to Cimarron, we now have high quality reproductions of the Cartridge Conversions on both the 1851 Navy and 1860 Army, the Open-Top and modern versions of the double-actions of the 1870s.

During the late 1860s the Thuer Conversion was performed on approximately 5,000 Colt cap-n-ball sixguns. With the originals, it was necessary to load powder, ram a ball home and then cap the nipple on the back of the cylinder. Thuer's invention altered the cylinder of percussion revolvers with a conversion ring added at the back end after the original cylinder was turned down. This allowed a tapered metallic cartridge, .36 caliber for the 1851 Navy and .44 caliber for the 1860 Army, to be inserted from the front end. Quite ingenious, but not tremendously successful.

Next came the patent for the Richards Conversions in 1868. Richards' patent was used by Colt to convert thousands of

cap-n-ball sixguns to the new fixed ammunition style. The Richards Conversion used a frame-mounted firing pin and can be recognized by an ejector rod that sticks out about an inch behind the ejector rod housing.

These conversions were followed with the Richards-Mason Conversions with a hammer mounted firing pin and ejector rod housing that extended all the way to the front of the cylinder. The non-exposed ejector rod would be one of the ideas incorporated in the great design ascribed to William Mason a few years later—the Colt Single Action Army.

The Cartridge Conversions are an important part of sixgun history spanning the time frame between Colt's percussion revolvers and the Peacemaker. It is evident from the examination of original Cartridge Conversions remaining from the 1860s and 1870s that these sixguns were well-used.

The original Colt Cartridge Conversions were chambered for rounds that used a heel-type bullet, that is a bullet whose base was smaller in diameter than the rest of the bullet. This resulted in a bullet that was the same diameter as the outside of the case much like today's .22 rimfire. The original Colt 1860 was a .44-45 caliber with a groove diameter of .449" as compared to today's .44 Magnums and .44 Specials with a groove diameter of .428" to .430". Likewise the 1851 Navy .36 cap-n-ball sixguns had barrels that measured at .375" to .376".



The Colts of the 1860's to 1870's are represented by these Cimarron sixguns: 1860 Army, 1860 Conversion, 1871-72 Open-Top, Single Action Army.

The Cimarron Cartridge Conversions are supplied with the 1851 Navy using standard .38 Special loads, or .38 Long Colt loads which are available from Black Hills Ammunition. However, the cylinder of the 1860 is not large enough in diameter to accept six rims with the diameter of modern .44 Special or Russian brass, so we now have the .44 Colt in modern form. Today's .44 Colt uses a .429" to .430" bullet and is made by simply trimming the .44 Special by approximately .06" with the rims being turned down to .487".

At first glance, the Cimarron Colt Cartridge Conversions appear to be cap-n-ball sixguns. A more thorough examination reveals the absence of a rammer to seat the round ball home and the addition of a loading gate and ejector rod for the entrance of loaded rounds and the exit of fired cases. They still field strip like the original percussion sixguns by removing a wedge pin from in front of the cylinder and then removing the entire barrel assembly from the main frame.

My test guns are in .38 Special and .44

Continued on page 32

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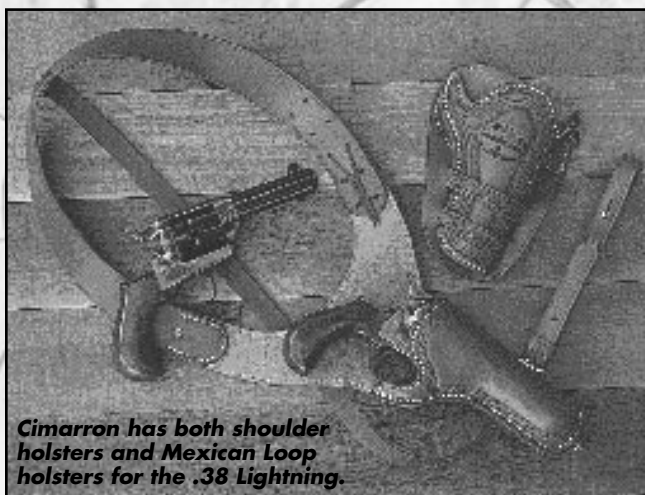
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Cimarron has both shoulder holsters and Mexican Loop holsters for the .38 Lightning.



Thunderer from Cimarron (center) is a blending of the Colt Single Action Army (top) and the 1877 Double Action.

Colt chamberings. Both were test-fired with smokeless loads and blackpowder handloads. These modern versions probably shoot better than their original counterparts ever did! The original 1851 had a 7½" barrel; however, Cimarron offers the option of the 5½" barrel found on my test sixgun. This 1851 Navy Conversion preferred the .38 Special Cowboy loads from both Black Hills and Winchester. These clocked out at 700 and 740 fps respectively and put five shots in 7/8" and 1½" at 50 feet.

With blackpowder loads the 1851 binds up very quickly, but this problem can be overcome with Pyrodex loads. I loaded 17 grs. of Pyrodex P in .38 Long Colt brass from Starline, which averaged 860 fps and shot into 2" at 50 feet. This is right with today's .38 Special loadings.

When Smith & Wesson brought forth their first bigbore cartridge-firing sixgun in 1869, Colt was still producing cap-n-ball sixguns. Smith had always been a fixed ammunition revolver manufacturer going all the way back to 1852 and their pocket pistols in .22 rimfire.

In early 1872, Colt brought forth their first model originally designed as a cartridge-firing sixgun. The Open-Top was not a conversion of a Conversion or a cap-n-ball of any sort, it was a new sixgun with new parts, while keeping the grip frame of the 1860 Army. It gets its model name from the retention of the basic profile of the Colt Cartridge Conversions with no top strap on the frame. This would change the following year with the advent of the 1873 Colt Single Action Army.

Approximately 7,000 Open-Tops were manufactured in .44 Rimfire. This made them very practical for the man who already had an 1860 Henry or 1866 Yellow Boy levergun chambered in .44 Rimfire. But again practicality butts up against authenticity if one decides to resurrect the Open-Top as a replica. Today's Open-Top from Cimarron uses modern centerfire ammunition and is offered with both the 1860 and 1851 Navy grip frame. The latter is most familiar to most shooters as it would become the Colt

Single Action grip frame in 1873.

Today's Open-Top is chambered in .38 Special, .38 Long Colt, .44 Colt, .44 Russian and .45 Schofield. The latter, also known as the .45 S&W, is the original chambering of the Smith & Wesson Schofield Model of 1875 and is the chambering of my test gun from Cimarron. The cylinder of the Open-Top is large enough to accept the rims of the .44 Russian round and chambered deep enough to handle the longer .44 Colt round.

Open-Tops from Cimarron are offered in four finishes—standard blue, the brilliant but fragile fire blue, charcoal blue and Cimarron's "Original Finish" which is an antiqued finish that looks like a 100-year-old gun. Grip frames are either an 1860 Army-style steel or 1851 brass Navy, and barrel length can be 5½" or 7½". Factor in all finishes, grip frames, barrel lengths and calibers and one has 48 choices when it comes to selecting an Open-Top.

My test Open-Top is a 7½" .45 Schofield, charcoal finish, with a brass Navy grip frame. Unlike the percussion revolver with the rear sight in the tip of the hammer, or the Cartridge Conversion with the rear sight on the frame behind the cylinder, the Open-Top's rear sight is on the back end of the barrel and consists of V-notch mated up with a silver front sight.

With Black Hills 230 gr. .45 Schofield, the Open-Top put five shots into 1¼" at 50 feet and does the same with my handload of the same weight bullet from Oregon Trail over 5.0 grs. of Accurate Arms N-100. Velocities with both loads are 723 and 654 fps respectively.

The original Model 1877s were a departure from the sixguns offered by Colt for the previous 40 years, just like the double-actions. The loading and unloading was still accomplished like with the SAA, by using a loading gate and an ejector rod on the side of the barrel. But these guns could be fired by cocking the hammer first or simply by pulling the trigger. Offered in two calibers, the .38 Long Colt came to be known as the Lightning while the .41 Long Colt version was the Thunderer.

The double-action mechanism was extremely fragile and double-actions are not permitted in SASS competition, so Cimarron modernized the 1877 by keeping it as a single-action, changing the grip frame by combining the trigger guard and front strap of the SAA with a backstrap that is a dead ringer for the Lightning and Thunderer.

My Thunderer, with a 3.5" barrel, is extremely well-finished with deep dark bluing on all parts except hammer and frame which are case colored. Metal to wood fit is excellent and the dark walnut grips are fine lined checkered and look and feel very good. The grip frame shape may look strange, but is extremely comfortable when firing .45 Colt loads in the short barreled Thunderer, feeling more like a double-action grip, and the sixgun does not twist or roll in the hand.

Sights are as found on the original 19th century sixguns consisting of a very thin front sight blade that literally tapers to a point and a shallow notch rear sight. Since the Thunderer and subsequently tested Lightning both shot low, filing the front sight to bring the elevation up also serves the purpose of making the top of the sight wider and easier to see.

The Thunderer was tested with four .45 Colt factory cowboy loads, with the results being nothing to get excited about—the average group size was 2¾". However, when I switched to Black Hills .45 Schofield load, groups shrank to 1½" and with one of my favorite handloads (Oregon Trail 255 gr. SWC over 8.0 grs. of Unique) groups were one ragged 1" hole at 50 feet with a muzzle velocity of 735 fps. This once again points to the fact that every sixgun has its own personality.

For those of us stuck in the 19th century, the "Colts That Never Were" make for a wonderful step back in time. Even if they never existed, they should have.



Readers can contact Cimarron at P.O. Box 906, Dept. AH, Fredericksburg TX 78624; phone: (830) 997-9090; website: www.cimarron-firearms.com

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The Scent Of A Man

One of the best places to be in the whole world is in an old gunsmith shop. The smell of cutting oil, metal shavings, Hoppe's and wood is everything a man could ever want in one small olfactory package. For most of us, even gunsmiths, visiting another custom gunshop is a pleasure of pleasures—we are surrounded by an atmosphere that reeks of manhood and manliness.

When you are in one of these fascinating, proud, last bastions of manhood—a place where weapons are crafted and revered—your eyes are met by all that is good in life. However, it is the things you cannot see that most custom gunsmiths are most proud and the items other gunsmiths fight over when a gunsmith dies.

Oh, the guns are important and they are on what the gunsmith builds his reputation, but it is the custom tooling that turns other gunsmiths' lights on.

Today's American gunsmiths are the best in the world, bar none, and our ingenious tooling is one of the best reasons. The highly specialized tools produced in gunshops are the items of which the gunsmith is most proud, but they are rarely, if ever, seen by the public.

These special tools, called jigs and fixtures, make jobs easier and allow the gunsmith to turn out quality work, fast and efficiently.

Jigs are usually simple implements that help perform specific jobs. For example, a simple drilling jig performs the job of locating a hole in a factory trigger into which an over-travel adjusting screw can be installed.

A fixture is a more complex piece that is composed of moving parts that operate as a unit to perform one or several tasks. In today's world of the computer, the programmed machining center is the ultimate fixture.

Today, members of the American Pistolsmiths Guild make hundreds of tools that you can buy directly from them or through Brownells. These tools can be a valuable cost-saving item that helps keep your cost low and saves the gunsmith huge amounts of time. They can be as simple as the new, little extractor tensioning tool made by Jack Weigand or as mathematically complex as the checkering fixture made by Neil Keller of Kustom Ballistics, or tools that fall somewhere in the middle like Joe Cominolli's ingeniously simple new barrel testing fixture.

These very special tools are works of machinists art. When a gunsmith dies, it is a shame that many of these tools are simply junked because nobody knows what they are and, of course, the widow never has a clue.

THE BARREL TESTER

Joe Cominolli's new barrel accuracy testing fixture is a tool even the most high-tech gun shops have wished they had, but did not have the time to build. Joe's fixture is a state-of-the-art tool that is a far cry from the old converted Springfield rifle actions we used in days gone by.

If you want to see if your barrel will shoot to match standards, or if you would



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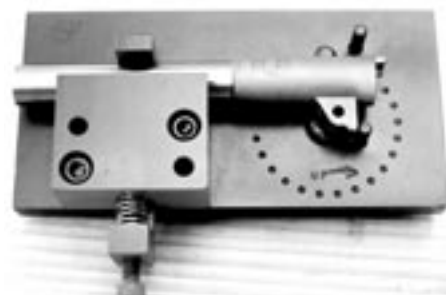
Neil Keller's checkering fixture is a unique tool you will see in small and large gunshops that aids the gunsmith in doing one of the most difficult jobs, checkering. The fixture is set up to do 20, 25 and 30 lpi checkering when it is installed in a vertical milling machine.

The tool allows the gunsmith to get near-perfect, mistake-free lines. In fact, he only has to clean up the diamonds with a single point file to finish. This tool is, without a doubt, one of the best cost savers and profit makers in any shop.

The old way of handcutting checkering with a file is not economical for today's gunsmith who must turn out work fast and near perfection. This checkering fixture is one tool that allows that to happen. Call Neil at (219) 724-2879.

The Weigand Lug Cutter

Jack Weigand's Model 1911 lug cutting tool is used as much as Neil Keller's checkering fixture and is a valuable asset if the lugs on a match barrel are going to be cut precisely so that it will shoot. We even use special carbide steel cutters to cut match barrel lugs made by John Arnold of Precision Gunsmithing that are available in .198", .199" and .200" diameter depending on the diameter of the slide stop. Call Jack at (570) 868-8358. John Arnold can be reached at (217) 585-1911.



simply like to test ammunition for the best loads, this is the way the big boys do it. I do not know if Joe is going to make these fixtures for sale since they are classed as a firearm and must have a serial number, which means you must have a Federal Firearms License to purchase one. If you are interested, call Joe at (315) 488-7536 or log onto www.cominolli.com.



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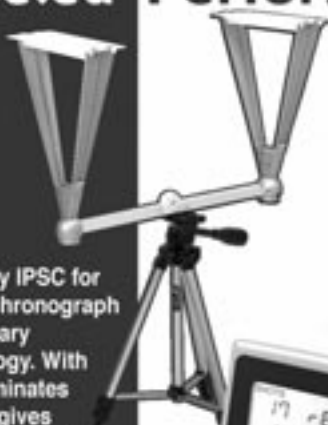
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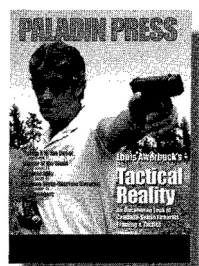
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GUNRIGHTS

JEFF SNYDER

CAN A "RIGHT" BE MODERATED IN THE INTEREST OF PUBLIC SAFETY?

Last column, I began an inquiry into whether rights, in order to be rights, must be absolute, or whether they may be subject to "reasonable" regulation in the interest of public safety. I chose for my investigation one of the most long-standing, "common-sense" exceptions to the right to keep and bear arms contained in the statute books and upheld by the courts: the prohibition against ownership or possession of firearms by convicted felons.

I looked at the history of this exception, ending with a New Hampshire Supreme Court opinion upholding the prohibition of ownership of firearms by convicted felons, despite the fact that the New Hampshire constitution unconditionally prohibits legislation that infringes on the right to keep and bear arms, and despite the history of the amendment of the state's constitution that indicated that the people of New Hampshire had rejected such an exception to the right to keep and bear arms.

The court upheld the exception on the grounds that the prohibition was a necessary restriction in the interest of public safety and welfare. I argued that if exceptions to the right were admitted on the basis of public safety, the right was destroyed.

This issue bears further examination, because so many gun owners believe and freely concede that their right to keep and bear arms is "not absolute," and is subject to "reasonable" regulation. This concession to moderation or reasonableness, I will try to show, is fatal to the right.

Yes, there are people who should not have guns. However, the point of the Second Amendment is precisely to deny government the power to decide who those people are, just as the point of the First Amendment is to deny government the power to decide what you may read and hear. Rights are not reasonable— and are not to be made reasonable— because government itself is not reason; it is force.

If a right is subject to an exception, any exception, then the principle on which the exception is founded is, of necessity, superior to the right itself, else there is no exception. If the felon exception, or the prohibition of possession by those subject to restraining orders, those

dishonorably discharged from the armed services, or those who are habitual users of marijuana— all current disqualifications from possession of arms under federal law— are justifiable because they are necessary or desirable to protect the public, then clearly the interest of "public safety" is superior to any individual's right to keep and bear arms.

In sum, public safety trumps a "right" to keep and bear arms; since it is superior to the "right," it absolutely defines the scope of the "right."

Now the concept of "public safety" has no inherent specific content that would impose a stopping point or define a boundary beyond which it does not extend. For example, if the legislature determined that an absolute prohibition against the private ownership or possession of arms would or could be expected to cause a reduction in the amount of crimes committed with guns, such a law would still be within the goal of securing "public safety."

Yet obviously the "right" to keep and bear arms in this case has completely disappeared. Thus, an exception to the "right" on grounds of public safety, logically, completely destroys the "right." The scope of the "right" shrinks as the scope of the concern with "public safety" expands, and the concept of "public safety" has no limit short of the complete destruction of the "right" itself.

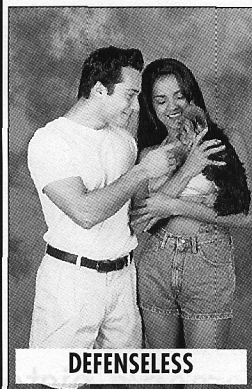
A Take-Home Test

Try this for yourself. The list of federal and state disqualifications for the ownership or possession of arms continues to expand, and Congress and the states have embarked on a new goal of keeping all guns out of certain hallowed locations— post offices and other government buildings, airports and school zones— also in the interest of safety, offering a partial proof that the concept of "public safety" has no logical stopping place.

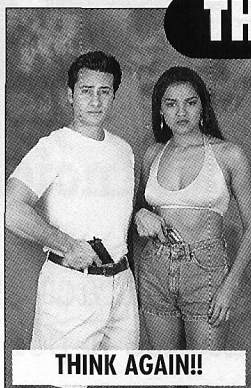
Try to determine how far the government could go on grounds of public safety. If you find a stopping place that leaves any private person with the right to keep and bear arms, explain why the concept of "public safety" indicates that you must stop there, and cannot go any further.

Continued on page 102

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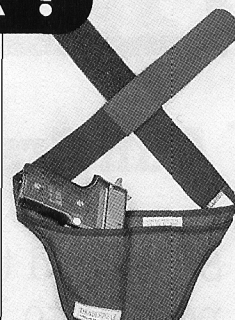
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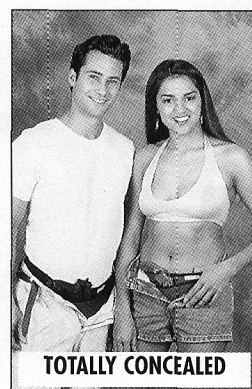
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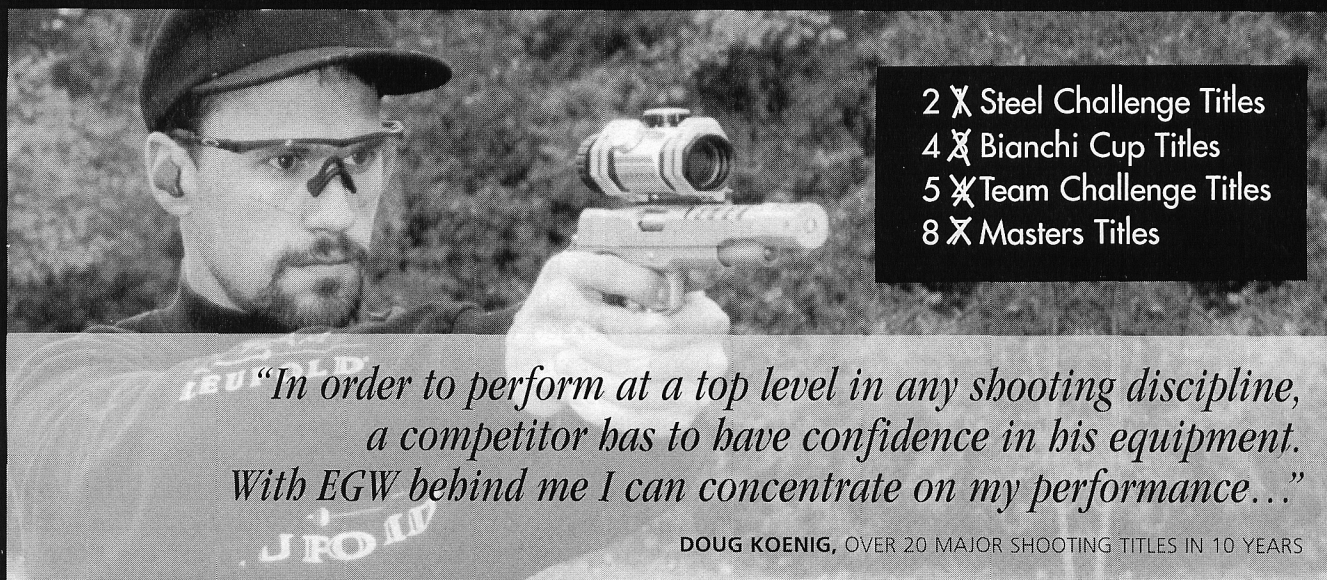
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The AYOOB FILES

Gun Grab: The Hit Man Incident

Situation: Sentenced to die, a convicted contract killer has nothing to lose when he snatches a policeman's pistol.

Lesson: Carrying an on-safe pistol can be a life-saver if the bad guy gains control of your weapon.

August 9, Cheyenne, Wyo., beginning of day shift. Laramie County Deputy Sheriff Richard A. Proctor slides his cocked and locked Browning service automatic into the vault where duty handguns are secured before going into the jail to handle prisoners. The sheriff, Ed Smalley, gives his deputies wide latitude in their choice of carry guns. Proctor has taken some ribbing about his gun from other deputies who like big .45s, but Proctor likes the Browning's higher round count, light recoil and flat concealability in plainclothes.

He learns that one of the prisoners is sick, a man named Jim Mcleod. Proctor will have to check that out and see if he needs medical attention. Mcleod is something of a cipher, but his cellmate, known only as the Hit Man, is something else again.

The Hit Man is a fascinating individual, to Proctor and to others. He began his adulthood as a deputy sheriff himself, then worked as a private investigator, and by all accounts was good at both. Along the line he had been involved in government work. It was said in police work that cops had to beware of the "three Bs": booze, broads and bucks. It was money and alcohol that led to the Hit Man's downfall.

The Hit Man's first step onto the slippery slope had been taking a contract to kill a gangster. He discovered that with a single press of the trigger, he could earn the equivalent of three months of a New York City police captain's salary. Soon his gun was for hire, and he specialized in long-range murder with a high-powered rifle, leaving no evidence behind and no connection with the victim.

He had tumbled to the bottom of the hill with the death of a 14-year-old boy. There was a confession on file, gained through some clever eavesdropping by the U.S. Marshal's Service. The Hit Man had recanted, but the jury chose to believe his first version. He had been convicted of murder and now had a death sentence hanging over his head.

For all that, Proctor liked the guy. The Hit Man was, after all, an ex-cop, and he came across as a quiet, thoughtful fellow. They conversed frequently at the jail, and as often happens between captor and captive, a bond of something like friendship had been forged. Deputy Proctor didn't think he had anything to fear from the Hit Man when he opened the barred door to check on the Hit Man's cellmate. He was wrong.

* * * *

Proctor had no sooner entered the cell when the two prisoners jumped him. The deputy was unarmed, but he was 6 feet 1, physically fit at 51, and knew how to fight. The adrenaline surge of fight-or-flight reflex gave him the strength to pick Mcleod up off the floor, and the deputy was about to throw the prisoner against the wall when the Hit Man got in behind him and grabbed him in a choke hold. With a man his own size strangling him and pulling him backward, the deputy lost his balance and the three men fell to the floor.

The wild scuffle didn't last much longer. Almost unconscious from lack of oxygen, the deputy had to submit. The two prisoners quickly bound him hand and foot, and then demanded the keys to the cellblock.

Continued on page 77

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Taffin TESTS

By John Taffin

The .475 Cooper is a reduced version of the .475 Linebaugh.

less is more when it comes to bigbore sixguns



When the .357 Magnum hit the sixgunning world in 1935, it was billed as "more powerful than any .44 or .45!" Twenty years later it took a very far backseat to the new champion, the .44 Magnum. Now we had surely arrived. It would be impossible to go any further.

Then came the .454 Casull and the .475 and .500 Linebaughs, all excellent cartridges for their intended use. Even this was not the end as we soon had Maximum length versions of the same basic cartridges. By the time we hit the latter, more and more sixgunners began to think that enough was enough.

One of these pistoleros who appreciated bigbores, but did not fancy big recoil was one of our readers, Don Wilson. He contacted me about a couple of sixguns he had built up with the inquiry as to whether or not I would be interested in trying them out. Me interested in a bigbore single-action sixgun? Does God make little green apples?

Proper arrangements adhering to all Federal laws were made to have Wilson's two pet sixguns shipped to me for testing.

Wilson wanted a really bigbore sixgun with six-shot capacity on a standard Ruger Blackhawk revolver using a rechambered Blackhawk cylinder. The desired result would be a .475 caliber using a 380 gr. bullet at a modest 800 to 900 fps.

Wilson did his homework. First he carefully measured the cylinder and figured he

could get by with a rim diameter of .545" and an overall length of 1.636" and still allow some room in the end of the cylinder mouth just in case a bullet should happen to move forward under recoil.

Both Wilson and his gunsmith, Larry Cooper, consulted with John Linebaugh,

thing, and the first .475 Cooper six-shot bigbore was born.

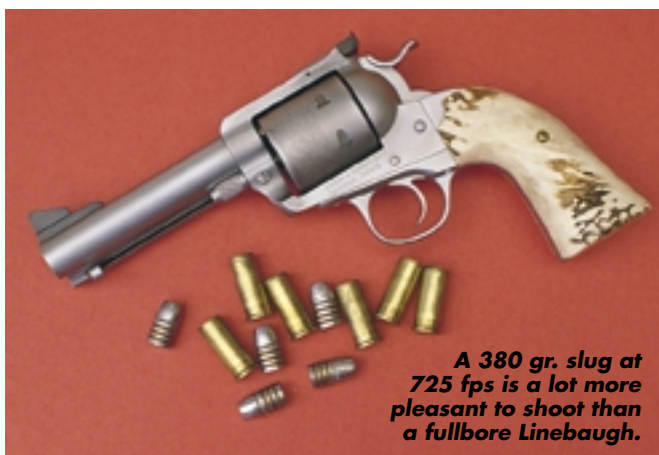
Wilson found 17.0 grs. of H4227 was a very pleasant shooting load. I went with 17.5 grs., because that was where my first setting of the powder measure happened to fall. These clocked at 725 fps, a most pleasant shooting 725 fps, and certainly would anchor any whitetail or mule deer that ever walked.

A more simple conversion is done to simply provide a rimmed case for revolvers chambered for the .50 Action Express. Brass is made from the .348 Winchester cut to the same length as the .50 AE, cylinders are slightly recessed to accept the rims of the new cartridge, and the capability of still accepting .50 AE brass is maintained. With this .50 Rimmed and the same powder charge using the same weight bullet, muzzle velocity is 775 fps and still very pleasant to shoot.

It just goes to prove that in bigbore sixguns, more really is less.



Readers wishing to communicate with a fellow reader, sixgun experimenter Don Wilson can be reached at P.O. Box 32, Dept AH, Wheatland IN 47597.



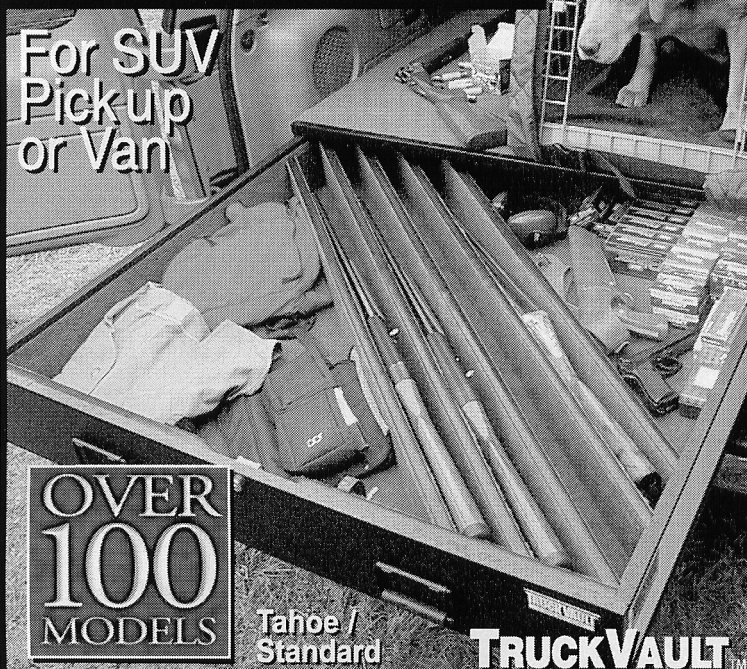
A 380 gr. slug at 725 fps is a lot more pleasant to shoot than a fullbore Linebaugh.

then had Cliff LaBounty rebores and Dave Adams rechamber a .45-70 Contender to .475 Cooper. Then the testing began. Wilson settled on a load of 20.0 grs. of H4227 under a 380 gr. bullet in the Contender barrel.

With gratifying results, Cooper rechambered a Blackhawk to .475 Cooper, rebarreled and slicked up every-

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THE SIXGUNS OF AMERICAN FRONTIER FIREARMS



Colt and Smith & Wesson started as handgun manufacturers on two entirely different paths in the mid-1800s. Colt dates back to 1836 and the first practical revolver, the Paterson. The five-shot Paterson with its folding trigger was a fragile design but a grand improvement in firepower over the single-shot pistols of the frontiersmen. Starting with the Paterson and moving through the Walker, 1851 Navy and 1860 Army, all of Colt's sixguns were cap and ball, or percussion, revolvers.

Smith & Wesson got started about the same time that Colt was bringing out the 1851 Navy and 1860 Army, but on a much different plane. Horace Smith and Daniel Wesson never did manufacture a cap and ball revolver, but rather brought forth the first cartridge-firing sixgun, actually a seven-shooter, in the first rim-fire cartridge, the lowly little .22.

Smith's Model No. 1 was a tip-up design, with the hinge at the top rear of the frame. While Colt's big sixguns were found in flap holsters on the hips of the troops, Smith & Wesson's little gun was more often hidden inside shirt or tunic.

Both companies now had their niche—Colt made large-frame revolvers while Smith produced their little guns in .22 and .32. However, unbeknownst to

Continued on page 86



Below, Taffin shot the groups on the left with two hands, standing, and those on the right, one-handed. It was good of John to try this; we do not pay extra for our writers to feign amputation.



Leather by San Pedro for AFF's .45 Colt.



TRIAL BY FIRE

AIMED VS. POINT SHOOTING

BY MASSAD AYOOB

The argument over using gun sights versus merely pointing the handgun for defensive use has been one of the most acrimonious in the history of handgunning. However rancorously the debate may have raged, actual scientific comparisons are notable by their absence.

It took several years before the chance came to test point shooting versus aimed fire in something resembling a scientific manner. Mike Briggs, who runs IDPA and Steel Challenge events in New Hampshire, invited me to design a stage for his upcoming IDPA Regional Championship of New England.

Since *Handgunner's* Ken Hackathorn has noted that the point shooting debate has revolved largely around "the two Colonels," two prominent and respected handgun authorities with field experience, I titled the match "The Applegate/Cooper Conundrum."

Through the good offices of Chris Edwards at Glock, two Glock 17 pistols were provided. John Koppel at Pro-Load donated a sufficient quantity of 124 grain +P 9mm ammunition. A Club Timer was donated for the course by Ronin Colman at PACT, Inc.

For safety's sake, shooters began with the pistol in hand, finger out of the trigger guard, and the front of the frame resting on a bench in front of the shooter, which also represented cover. Though all would be briefed on the Glock's function, many shooters would be new to this pistol and accustomed to a longer, heavier trigger pull.

Therefore, the test Glock had New York triggers, specifically the NY-1 module which gives a firm resistance from the beginning and brings the pull weight to a nominal 8 lbs. An armorer removed both front and rear sights from one of the pistols.

In designing the course and placing the targets, I wanted to prove or disprove as many hypotheses as possible. Since many instructors recommend that non-visual indexing of the firearm be limited to no more than four or five yards. One target was placed at four yards and another at five.

For decades, FBI and NRA police instructors insisted that all shooting at the seven yard line and closer be done point-style, with the gun below line of sight. So, one target was placed at seven yards. This target, unlike the first two, was partially obscured by masking, which represented hard cover.

Advocates of point shooting have insisted that unsighted fire would work reliably out to 12 yards. Therefore, a target was placed at 12 yards. There was a no-shoot target in front and slightly to the side of this target. A shooter could

Continued on page 99

Shooters at an IDPA match used identical Glocks, one with sights, one without.



Accuracy Comparison

	4 Yards	5 Yards	7 Yards	12 Yards	15 Yards	Average
Sighted Fire	96.2%	92.0%	77.5%	71.4%	7.9%	69.0%
Point Shooting	96.9%	93.4%	71.5%	59.0%	7.9%	65.7%

Match Score Comparison

	Average Time	Average Score
Sighted Fire	10.13 secs.	38.17 points
Point Shooting	10.04 secs.	35.61 points





colt model 1849 pocket pistol

By Mike Cumpston

By the late 1840s, Samuel Colt's revolvers had demonstrated their utility on the Texas Frontier and in the war with Mexico. Colt's experiences with military contracts had convinced him that his business would have to serve a much larger and more stable market in order to survive and grow. In 1847, he announced plans to produce a revolver of manageable size and simple construction that would be useful to the general public.

The design that emerged was the .31 caliber Baby Dragoon. This small-framed revolver used fewer action parts than the earlier martial revolvers. The size made it suitable for comfortable and discrete carry. The time was ripe, as the Mexican War had opened a vast area of Western territory for expansion. The volatile political climate of the times prompted citizens across the continent to look to themselves for personal protection.

With the addition of an attached loading lever and other refinements, the Baby Dragoon became the Pocket Model of 1849. It arrived on the scene just in time to satisfy the demand created by the California Gold Rush and remained in production until 1872. (Shumaker reports production of 3,000 units between 1872 and 1875.)

Peak years occurred in the early 1850's Gold Rush period and during the Civil War years. The Colt single-action lock-work came to maturity in the model of 1849 and formed the basis for the Navy and Army models to come. While these larger pistols achieved more historical recognition, the Pocket Model remained Colt's best selling revolver throughout the percussion era. Total production reached 340,000 units.

Johnny Bates, a local collector and walking encyclopedia of frontier history,

has an original Colt Pocket Model in his collection. Produced in 1856 with the serial number 115,711, the Bates gun is a small trigger guard variation. It is in original trim except for a replacement loading lever.

This gun is a five-shot .31 caliber with 4" barrel and is generally representative of its type. The revolver was later produced in six shot versions and several barrel lengths were available. Overall length is 9.5", about 1" longer than a common 3" J-frame. The 1849 is significantly smaller in width and height than a modern double-action. Bates considered this revolver a bit elderly for firing and chose an essentially identical Uberti replica for a shooting impression.

We repaired to Bates' private shooting range with a good supply of FFFG black-powder, #10 caps and .31 caliber balls. We found that 12.5 grs. of the fine granulation powder filled the chambers with enough room left over to seat the 50 gr. ball. Average velocity with this combination worked out to 720 fps with a .25 ACP-esque 58 ft./lbs. of energy. We shot several rounds into an 1 1/4" redwood window frame and observed that the balls stopped after about 1" of travel.

The trigger pull was typical, unaltered Colt single-action. We found that shooting from the duelist stance, we could easily produce palm-sized groups at 10 yards. At just over 40 feet, I put a one-handed five-round string into 4". The best four shots formed a 3" group. The group was horizontally well-centered, and about 5" high.

The only malfunctions encountered



No one ever claimed round balls were accurate.



Colt Walker (top) dwarfs an 1849.

were a couple of failures to fire caused by cap fragments which fell into the hammer cut and prevented full hammer fall. This is a common occurrence with percussion revolvers. It can be minimized or eliminated by proper handling technique.

When the Pocket Model arrived on the scene, the closest tactically equivalent small handgun was the Allen pepperbox. Most pocket-sized pistols were of the single shot Derringer-type with a few designs capable of repeat fire by use of multiple barrels. The only apparent advantage possessed by those contemporary pistols was the availability of more effective calibers and loads.

The Model of 1849 was a much trimmer package than the majority of the Allen revolvers and had a definite accuracy advantage as range increased. Then, as now, many handgun carriers were perfectly happy with mousegun ballistics. The Pocket Model maintained a strong market presence even after the introduction of the slightly larger .36 caliber Pocket Police and Pocket Navy Models.

In recent years it has become a popular, if inaccurate conceit, among the anti-gun crowd that Samuel Colt invented the American Gun Culture as a marketing tool. Historical revisionism aside, Colt's introduction and promotion of the 1849 Pocket Model certainly did democratize personal armament in a manner most consistent with the American experience.



THERE WERE PISTOLS IN THE PEPPERONI

We think the guards in the Sao Paulo prison are gonna be brown-bagging their dinners in the future— and maybe checking delivery boys a little closer before buzzing them in the gate. Since the guys used to send out for pizza every night, they didn't think twice when a red-capped kid in a Pizza-Boy outfit waltzed through the door with a stack of those distinctive flat boxes. The second kid didn't raise any eyebrows either. By the time the fourth teenager came through, the guards were turning quizzical, but then it was too late. The lads had already opened those boxes and pulled out pistols, no anchovies, no pineapple.

Holding the guards against a wall, the boys proceeded to pop open all the cells and invite the inmates to exit, stage right. Later, investigators learned the pizza boys only wanted to spring one prisoner, their pal, but they figured that 60 convicts running through the streets might be a pretty good cover for their getaway. They were right.

State officials said the regulation regarding pizza deliveries was "being reviewed."



By Nick Petrosino

We're Not Quite That Technologically Advanced Yet

People use the phone these days to do just about everything— grocery shopping, paying their bills, even something called "phone sex," although I look at my phone and I just can't imagine how that would work. One thing you can't do on the phone, according to cops in Biloxi, Miss., is pull armed robberies—that you've still gotta do in person. Management of the Treasure Bay Casino outside Biloxi thought the guy was kidding at first when he called and announced a telephonic stickup, but he persisted, and finally made believers out of them. Simple, he explained, just deliver \$100,000 in unmarked small bills to my house within two hours, or I'll start shooting.

Presumably, he was gonna drive to the casino and com-

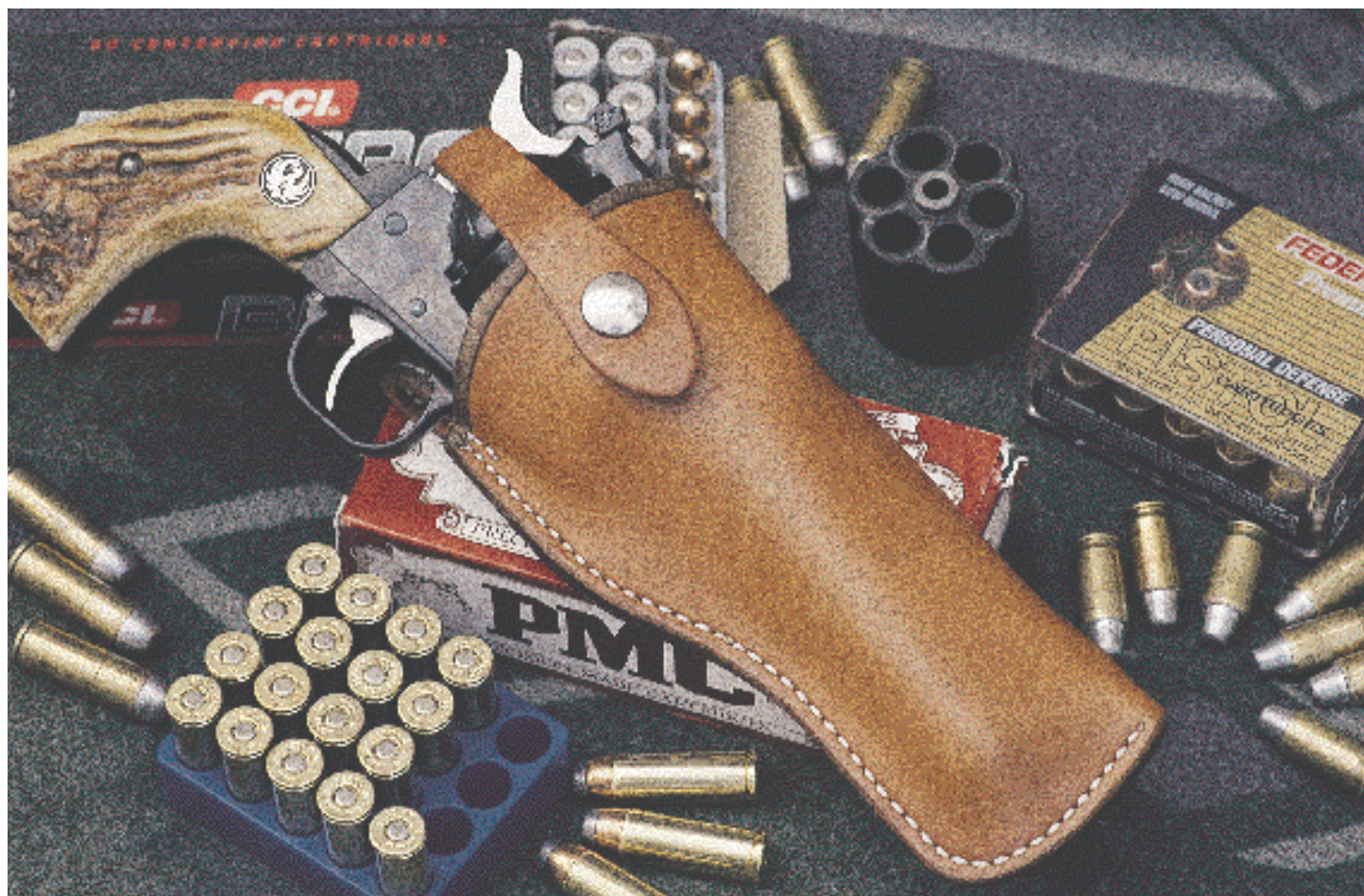
mence blasting rather than perforating his residence, but the Treasure Bay folks didn't want to press him. They were kinda puzzled by how they were going to carry this out until the suspect made it easy for them: he gave 'em his name and address.

For whatever reason, the people at Treasure Bay decided to call Biloxi PD and ask their advice before making the Money Run, and Captain Bill Kirk told them to let him handle it.

About an hour later, with nutcase Ronald Dean Cherry, 52, safely behind bars, Captain Kirk told reporters, "It makes our job extremely easy when they give their name and address. We don't have too many man-hours on this one. Put the paperwork together and rock and roll."



By Nick Petrosino

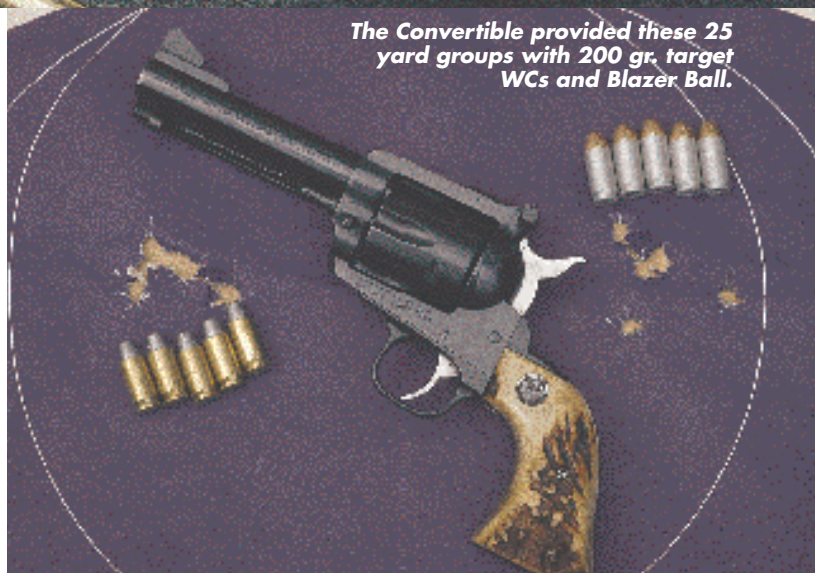


RUGER'S LIGHT WORKING GUN

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.45 CONVERTIBLE IS THE
IDEAL WORKING GUN.



The Convertible provided these 25 yard groups with 200 gr. target WCs and Blazer Ball.

By Mike Cumpston

During the early '70s, the late Dr. Mel Tappin produced a thought-provoking series of books and articles about survival in the event of short-term or long-term social upheaval. In his book *Survival Guns*, he explored various common-sense approaches to selecting a battery of basic arms that would be of particular value in the event of societal breakdown, including interruption or loss of gunsmith and factory repair facilities.

Logistics played an important part in his recommendations, which frequently included selecting defensive and utility guns chambered for the same rounds.

Tappin regarded the Colt 1911, complete with selected spare

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2001



Convertible Ruger can take hot or mild .45 Colt loads (at left) or standard .45 ACP (on right).

spring, which set the trigger pull at a fully functional 1 lb. 6 ozs.

During initial and later range sessions, I entertained myself by shooting at homemade cottontail rabbit targets and the standing woodchuck images designed for the bow and arrow set. I did this with a variety of .45 ACP rounds as well as a Keith-like handload consisting of 18.5 grs. 2400 in the Colt cylinder. This load diverged from the Keith standard by substitution of CCI Magnum primers and a cast 250 gr. flat point cowboy bullet.

I found that I could hit the vitals of my small game targets with good consistency shooting one-handed from 60 feet. This was with the noonday sun flaring off the front sight. Given optimum sunlight and a two handed grip, my range of confidence extends to 25 yards.

parts, as the ideal defensive sidearm, and recommended the basic Ruger Blackhawk .45 Convertible as an ideal *working* gun. The Blackhawk would draw from the same ammunition supply as the 1911 and had the added advantage of high performance .45 Colt handloads.

A prominent factor in his praise of the Blackhawk was the robust nature of the design. The Blackhawk family closely resembles the hockey puck in freedom from parts breakage.

By and large, owners of .45 caliber handguns are high volume shooters. This has always been true among 1911 shooters and the recent renaissance of the old Colt round has a growing number of single-action shooters stacking up supplies of empty brass and machine-cast bullets of traditional design.

Whether motivated by recreational or survival concerns, the basic Blackhawk affords the .45 enthusiast a useful vehicle for expanding his shooting horizons.

Performance Parameters

With a growing supply of ACP components and fond memories of hours spent afield with a short barreled .357 Blackhawk, I set out to explore the performance parameters of a 4 1/2" barrel .45 ACP/.45 Colt Convertible, giving particular attention to its applicability as a belt-portable field gun and general recreational piece.

The short .45 with its no-frills alloy grip frame and ejector rod housing weighs in at 38 ozs., making it 1 oz. heavier and 1.5" longer than my Series 80 Colt. This makes it 8 to 10 ozs. lighter than the all-steel magnum New Model Blackhawks now available in a full selection of barrel lengths.

The only non-standard features on my gun are a set of stag grips and the well-publicized alteration of the trigger return

The .45 Colt load seemed promising and I put up an archery deer target at 50 yards to refine my sight setting. After minimal fine-tuning, the Colt loads consistently landed in the chest and neck area which, while resembling the vitals of a trophy whitetail, was actually about the size of a Labrador retriever. This was done from standing, two handed under a roofed firing point that provided ideal lighting.

It leads to the supposition that, all things remaining equal, I should be capable of using the Ruger to address deer-like targets of opportunity *more* than 50 yards distant. The reality of the situation, however, is that in the field, *ceteras* seldom meets *paribus*.

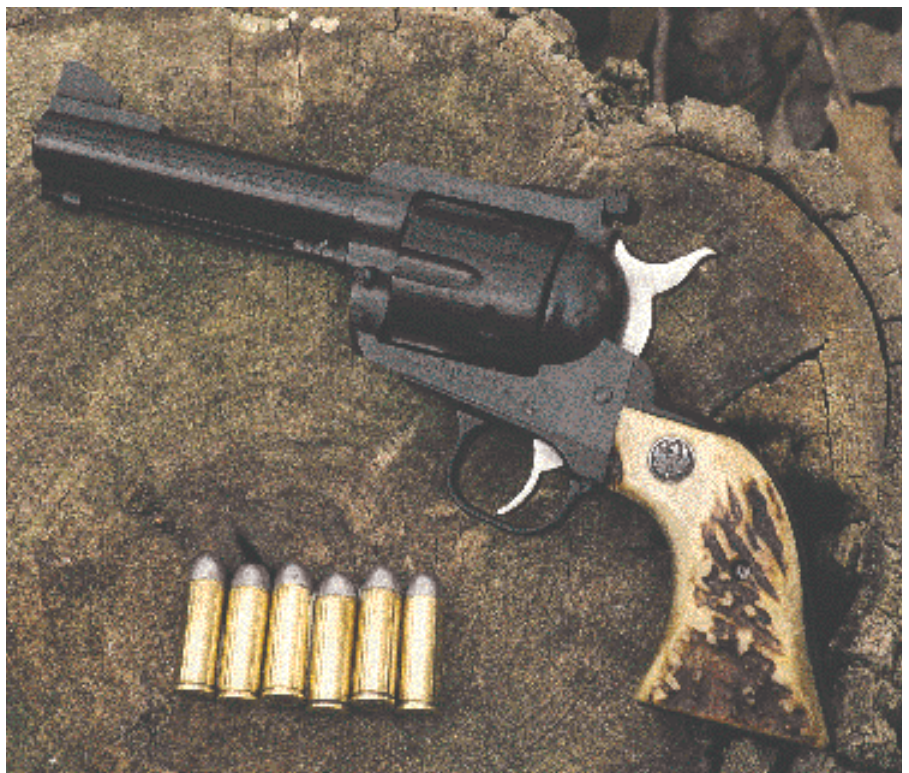
With good lighting and an ideally placed deer, *maybe* I could extend the range. With poor lighting and an obscure target, my effective range would get significantly shorter.

.45 ACP Cylinder

I used the above sight setting while bench testing a representative sample of loads at 25 yards. My favorite light-spring Gold Cup load consists of a 200 gr. commercial cast SWC over 3.5 grs. of Bullseye. This hit point-of-aim for elevation and windage. At an average of 1.75" for three, five-round groups, the Ruger duplicated the accuracy of this load from my stock Series 80 Gold Cup.

The CCI Blazer 230 gr. ball load was on for elevation and about 1" to the right of center. Federal 165 gr. Personal

Continued on page 104



The author embellished his working Ruger with stag grips.

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

WORLD SHOOTOFF 2000

**THE THRILL OF VICTORY! A DARKHORSE
WITH A STOCK GUN UPSETS THE FIELD
OF EXOTIC RACEGUNS WITH A
STUNNING PERFORMANCE.**

PHOTOS AND STORY BY NYLE LEATHAM

A former Golden Gloves boxer won the 2000 *American Handgunner* World Shootoff with a stock gun, outgunning all the exotic raceguns. Everette "Stormin' Mormon" Brunelle was a dark horse coming into the finals of the man-on-man match, the smart money riding on European champ Angus Hobdell who posted the fastest cumulative Grand Master stage times to win the popular three-day warm-up matches of the Winchester Challenge event.

Hobdell, hailing from England, kept up his momentum to win the Grand Master division in the World Shootoff, accumulating 79 points. A point is awarded for each bout a shooter wins in the man-on-man, best two-of-three format that makes the Shootoff such a popular match with the shooters.

The Shootoff machinery doesn't stop with deciding main category winners. They have to go against each other in

cross-discipline bouts, pitting single-action sixguns against fully tricked-out raceguns. Handicapping is employed as necessary, such as fewer targets for revolvers. Single-actions shooters are permitted two hoglegs in lieu of reloading.

Making a man-on-man ladder for eight or 16 is one thing, but for a whole match of 250 or more, it becomes a daunting task. It starts with squadding shooters by gun type, then again by their shooting ability, and then even further splitting everyone into a dizzying list of subdivisions, such as High Lady Auto.

Enthusiastic sponsors donated tons of prizes to reward everybody from Super Senior, Junior, Active Duty Military, Duty-Rig Law Enforcement and others. A bewildering variety of sponsored rifle, shotgun and pistol side matches and team stake shoots swelled the shooting opportunities.

Mostly from among entrants, designated Range Officers operate each squad



Match winner Everette Brunelle (right) beat a host of dot-sighted raceguns with his stock STI. We could put a performance like this to music and call it, "It's The Singer, Not The Song."





Shootoff champ Everette Brunelle soaks up recoil with the Modern Isosceles flexed arm approach. It works for slipping a jab too.



Two contestants blaze away in the man-on-man format. The winner is often the fastest shooter, but sometimes it's the guy who doesn't run out of ammo. This is not embarrassing unless there's only one target to shoot at, which can happen, and then you're at slide lock facing a 15 yard Pepper popper laughing at you.

to oversee safe shooting and scoring. A computer-generated ladder waits at each stage to pair up squad members at random for the best of three, single-elimination bouts.

In mirror image arrangements for left and right shooters, all targets are steel knockdowns, varying in size and shape from stage to stage. Most daunting are the wicked little one-third scale "pesky poppers." Being tiny, they inspire careful aiming. Many shooters have less trouble with them than a big U.S. popper, which looks easy and can psych the unwary into blazing-fast misses.

With one exception, all stages have seven targets. Six must be flattened—four for a revolver—prior to going for the final "stop plate" which determines the winner by whose target is on the bottom. No timer needed here, thank you!

But woe to the speed merchant who goes for his stopper target before blasting down his others in proper order, for his ears shall ring with the line judge's dread word, "Fault!"

The sole exception is the insidious "Sudden Death," which presents only one target per shooter, tombstone-shaped. So simple, yet so hard. One draw, one accurate shot at 15 yards. The yelps, the groans, the multiple bangs of fast misses. Reloads are not unknown. Even after nine years, the veterans sometimes forget the wisdom of slowing down to go fast. Yet, who could doubt that these folks are having the time of their lives?

For pistol practitioners, no finer opportunity exists to go man-on-man against one's peers with safety and honor in a well-run, friendly rivalry than the *American Handgunner* World Shootoff Championship.

Does everyone love it? Of course not. After all, it does revive the idea that several days of steady shooting earn your way into a final showdown. Then after having knocked out all of the competition, but one, and after six runs for best of seven, tied at three bouts apiece, the whole match boils down to a single run.

Jeff Cooper used to say, "The shootoff is the match," just like in a real life encounter. He never understood how shooters wanted any other criteria than a final shot to decide the issue.

Match founder Paul Miller explained his original inspiration for the all-shootoff format was based on his observation that the most fun anyone seemed to have in IPSC matches was invariably the shootoff. The problem was that only the top 16 in a match with perhaps 200 shooters would reach the shootoff. Miller's solution was the World Shootoff.

The idea of an individual contesting his skill and courage with weapons against equals is probably as old as the human spirit. Nowhere in recent times has it been better done than at the *American Handgunner* World Shootoff.





Frank Cruz from the Army Marksmanship team. Unlike virtually every other form of shooting competition, like high power rifle, the armed forces teams do not dominate "action" pistol matches. Why, we have no clue.



Taner Cunningham proves it's the size of the fight in the dog that matters.



Range officers look on as two competitors hose down the steel targets. The little flags at the bottom make it look like lots of people flock here from around the world, but to be honest we have yet to see a single entry from Chad. We wish we would. Isn't Chad a cool name for a country? "And now shooting for Chad..."



YOU
CAN
WIN AN

S&W

INTERCHANGEABLE
BARREL SYSTEM



FROM WEIGAND CUSTOM HANDGUNS



TO ENTER CONTEST: Fill out the CUSTOM GUN GIVEAWAY entry card attached to page 106. If the card is missing, use a postcard (no envelopes). Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Dept. H1, POB 880409, San Diego, CA 92168-0409. Entries must be received before FEBRUARY 1, 2001.

Limit 1 entry per household. This contest is open to individuals who are residents of the United States and its territories, only. Agents and employees of Publishers Development Corporation and their families are excluded from entering. Contest void where prohibited or restricted by law. Winners must meet all local laws and regulations. Taxes and compliance with firearms regulations will be the responsibility of the winners. Winners will be notified by CERTIFIED MAIL on official letterhead. No purchase necessary to enter.

Pistolsmith extraordinaire Jack Weigand has done it again. He's invented yet another ingenious custom handgun with features never offered before. It's a conversion of a Smith & Wesson L-frame to a multi-barrel system, reminiscent of the Dan Wesson revolver, but far more sophisticated.

Weigand's interchangeable barrels feature aluminum shrouds and Jarvis stainless steel match barrels. The barrels lock up to the shrouds with a clever "deep key" system in the frame, machined .020" into the frame.

The forcing cone is cut to match dimensions and the muzzle crown is carefully cut to produce optimum accuracy. The system uses a full-length ejector rod from a 6" Model 686 for complete ejection.

The cylinder crane is locked up to the frame with a precision engineered ball-detent lockup. The front sights are fully interchangeable without use of tools. Weigand offers a great selection of front sights too. This five barrel package features one of each: a Patridge, red ramp fiber optic and Trijicon dot. The blades heights are available from .200", .250" and .300" to compensate for any load or distance.

Weigand's interchangeable barrel conversion of an L-frame also features his "Tame the Beast" package:

- Precision action job*
- Round and polish trigger*
- Chamfer cylinder charge holes*
- Glass bead matte finish*
- Polish all screw heads*
- Etched Weigand logo*
- Interchangeable barrel system*
- Weigand SW2000 Optima Scope mount*
- Tasco Optima 4 MOA dot*
- Hogue exotic hardwood Monogrips*

Given Weigand's outstanding reputation for producing innovative custom handguns of superior quality craftsmanship, the new interchangeable barrel system may well rejuvenate the used L-frame market! This is one of the finest Custom Gun Giveaway packages we have ever featured. It comes with five barrels: 2.5", 3", 4", 5" and 6". If you don't win, you can order a setup just like this for \$1,720 (subtract \$390 if you supply your own L-frame). Obviously, there are many options you could choose because Weigand runs a true custom shop and one-of-a-kind orders are not just accepted, they are welcomed. Jack Weigand, incidentally, is the new president of the American Pistolsmiths Guild and a former Pistolsmith Of The Year.

Weigand C. H. Inc.
685 South Main Road
Mountaintop, PA18707
Phone: (570) 868-8358
Website: www.jackweigand.com



S&W PERFORMANCE CENTER

By Cameron Hopkins

Studio Photos By Ichiro Nagata
Factory Photos By Cameron Hopkins



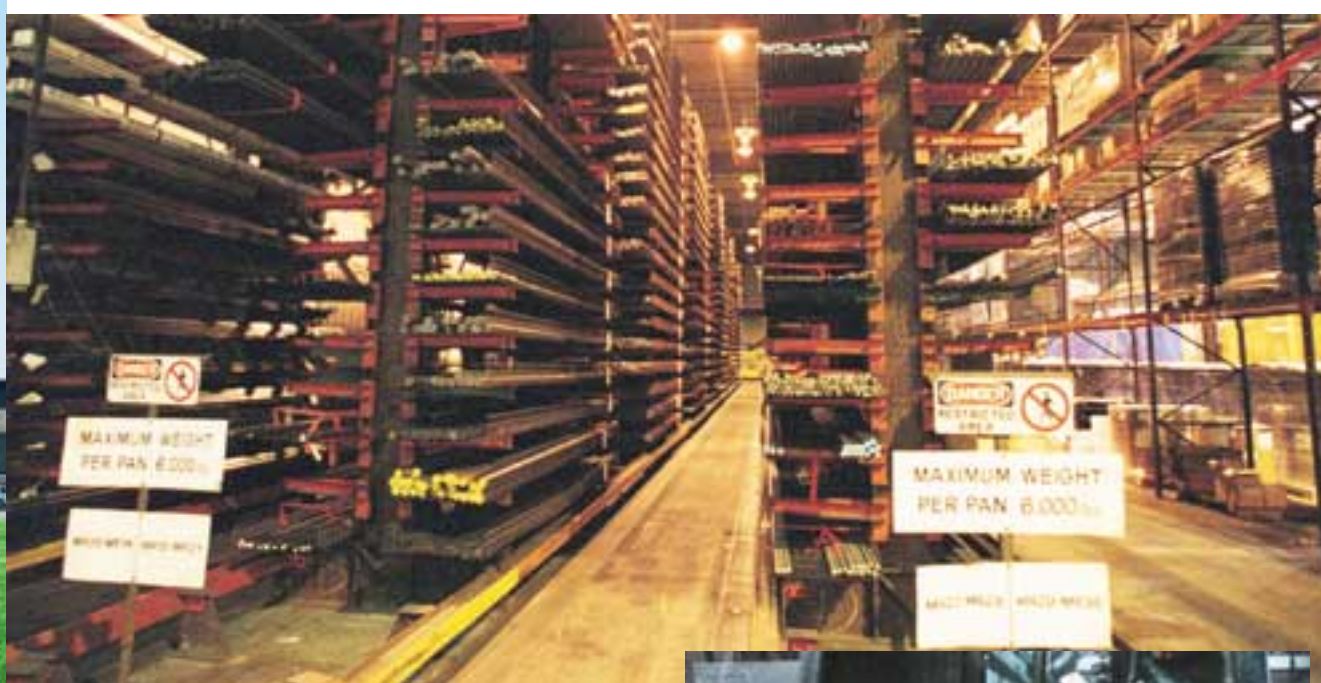
Everything you know about the making of a custom handgun goes out the window when you step into the square building several hundred yards behind the main plant at Smith & Wesson's sprawling 86-acre factory site. The square building used to be the hanger for Smith & Wesson's corporate plane, but that was back when there was an airstrip on the property. Today the airstrip is a vast playground of soccer fields, donated to various soccer clubs in the Springfield community. The only *quid pro quo*: the kids have to mow the fields, a not inconsiderable task.

In the square building resides the Performance Center, the "custom shop" started by noted pistolsmiths Paul Liebenberg and John French in 1990. French, a revolver specialist, and Liebenberg, a 1911 expert, have both since left the PC, but in their footsteps walk a small collection of the most skilled and gifted gunsmiths, machinists, engineers, polishers, engravers, designers and fitters who have ever worked at 2100 Roosevelt Avenue. To say that the founders of the PC have left, implying that things can't ever be as good, would be like lamenting the departure of Joe Montana from the

49ers. A kid named Young seemed to fill in pretty well.

The new kids on the PC block are a cadre of craftsmen, some of whom date back to the original shop, who were hand-picked from the main plant. Each and every one of them must meet the basic criteria for employment in the PC, the first of which is a requirement to be involved in the handgun sports. You have IDPA shooters, handgun hunters, IPSC competitors, PPC marksmen, bullseye shooters and bowling pin blasters, all represented in the PC. The second criteria is that anyone selected for the PC must have been educated either as an engineer or a tool and die maker. Beyond that, the only other stipulation is a healthy appetite; the lunch room is usually stocked with various goodies the gunsmiths bring to share.

Many of the components for PC guns are rough-machined in the main plant by skilled workers.



S&W's steel inventory (above) before it moves to the giant forge (right) where it starts on the way to becoming a gun. Hand filing a frame (below).



"We're all shooters," says PC business manager Tom Kelly, a 27-year S&W veteran who came to the PC in 1991, the year after it opened. "We all participate in one or another of the handgun sports. We know what it takes to make a good gun."

Custom guns are, in most frames of reference, factory-made guns that are improved in function and form by a gunsmith. This is not what the PC does. The PC manufactures its own guns on its own CNC equipment based on designs and blueprints drawn up by its own engineers, using "solid modeling" computerized design software. The CNC machines, two Mazaks and one Milltronics, are single spindle vertical machining centers. The Mazaks hold 30 different tools in their hoppers while the Milltronics is a 22-tool machine. Under the direction of engineer John Clark (27 years with S&W, 8 years in the PC), the computerized machines utilize cutters and tooling

that is made in-house by the PC. "We have to be much more versatile than the main plant. We might have to make a compensator in the morning and a Schofield barrel in the afternoon," Clark said.

The PC is certified as an ISO 9000 facility, a complex program of quality assurance that is about as easy to earn as graduating summa cum laude from nearby Harvard. "If you're not a detail person, you probably better look elsewhere," Clark opined.

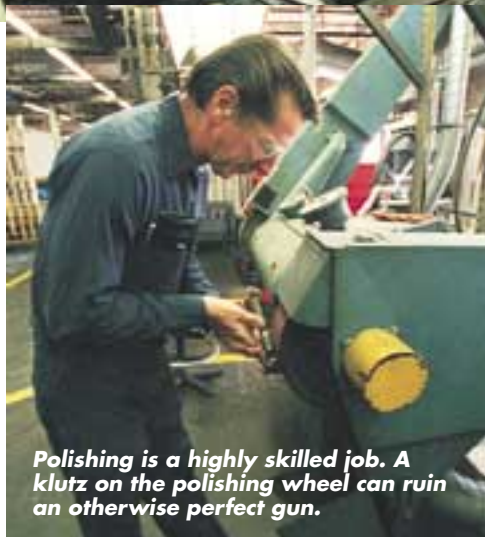
The PC manufactures its own frames, slides and barrels, but obviously it would be foolish to put a 30 ton forging press out there in the old hanger. Components are brought into the PC from the main plant, usually 60 to 75 percent completed. From there, Clark takes over and finish-machines the parts. Heat treating is also done at the main plant, but finishing is done in the PC.



Engineer John Clark of the PC might CNC a compensator in the morning and a Schofield barrel in the afternoon.



Herb Belin (left) inspects a robotic measuring device checking a frame for correct tolerances. Every S&W pistol is checked for trigger pull (below) with a special computerized measurer.



Polishing is a highly skilled job. A klutz on the polishing wheel can ruin an otherwise perfect gun.



The PC produces about 400 to 500 custom guns a month, Kelly said. They are all made-to-order. "There is no inventory of Performance Center guns. They're all pre-sold before we make them," Kelly explained.

It works like this: the PC design team, which potentially includes everyone in the shop, comes up with an idea for a new gun. They do their own prototyping and then present the one-of-a-kind creation to one of several S&W distributors that specialize in specialized guns. Prototyping is done according to a system known as "concurrent processing" in which designing and building a prototype is done simultaneously.

"We don't cobble out components on a Bridgeport and then hope they fit, we prototype in the same manner as production does in the main plant," said PC chief engineer Dick Mochek.

Once a new design has been prototyped, a sales call is made. Lew Horton, Camfour and RSR are their best customers. The chosen distributor is given an exclusive on the model and the guns are

then sold through that distributor's network of retailers.

Sometimes one distributor passes on a given model, like the new 12" Model 629 Hunter, but another jumps on it. "Sometimes they live to regret passing one up," Kelly chuckles. "Everyone passed on the 12" 629, but Lew Horton finally bought it. Now it's in its fourth production run. It was a huge hit."

The PC also offers basic custom gunsmithing services for customer guns, like an action job on an L-frame or a trigger job on a 5906. This work is performed by a four-man team that the PC refers to as the "charge team" because they charge for their work. The prices are surprisingly reasonable: \$82.50 for a proper action job on a revolver, stoning and polishing, not a simple coil-clip job.

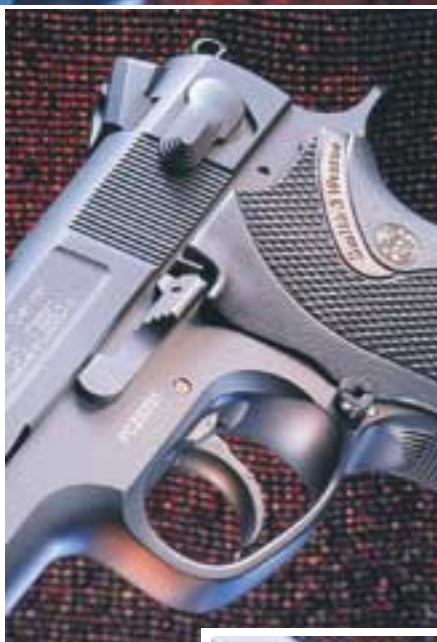
The PC is broken down into two basic areas of responsibility, revolvers and autopistols. Heading up the auto team is Tom Gordon, a veteran from the Liebenberg-French days. Jimmy Rae captains the revolver team, a 28-year veteran of S&W who, if you cut him,

bleeds Smith & Wesson blue. "He even comes in here when he's on vacation, with his flip-flops and shorts on. Jimmy loves working on revolvers," Kelly said of his most popular gunsmith.

There are three master gunsmiths on the revolver team, one assigned solely to the Schofield project and two for everything else. The auto team has six gunsmiths. Even though the PC does about 75 percent of its volume in revolvers, the gunsmiths on the auto team outnumber their cylindrical colleagues. "It's not that we do more autos, it's that autos are much more labor intensive to build," Kelly explained.

All autos come into the PC as 5.5" guns, full-size service pistols, with about 60 percent of the machining done in the main plant. From there, the PC cuts them down to whatever size they need, from a Shorty Forty to a new 3.25" compact version of the single-action Model 945. "We blend the precision of the CNC equipment and combine that with precision handfitting," said auto team leader Gordon. "The key to our guns is the fitting. Just about

Continued on page 60



The .45 CQB features a handlapped slide-to-frame fit, Novak sights, a custom hammer and more internal polishing than a Swiss watch.

PC pistols feature revised barrel geometry to stay locked longer, giving better accuracy and reduced recoil.



THE .45 CQB

Despite the ongoing brouhaha in gun magazines over the “controversy” of stopping power, the truth is that big bullets blow big holes. The legendary .45 ACP remains the unrivalled king of the bigbores, and many a handgunner will swear to the efficacy of John Browning’s most enduring contribution to the job security of coroners and medical examiners.

Agreement on caliber is one thing, but consensus on the platform is another. There is considerable hue and cry for the 1911, a chorus proclaiming it the best vehicle, but the fanfare is not quite unanimous. Serious handgun professionals from every discipline—police, competition, military and training—differ in their needs for a sidearm. These contrarians, for a number of legitimate reasons, do not feel comfortable with a cocked-and-locked single action autopistol.

Our God is a compassionate god, so He made allowance for such idiosyncrasy by giving us alternatives to the 1911 such as SIG’s P-220, Glock’s M36, Ruger’s P-97 and Smith & Wesson’s Model 4506, all of which deliver .45 ACP firepower in a gun whose primary selling point is that of *not* being a 1911.

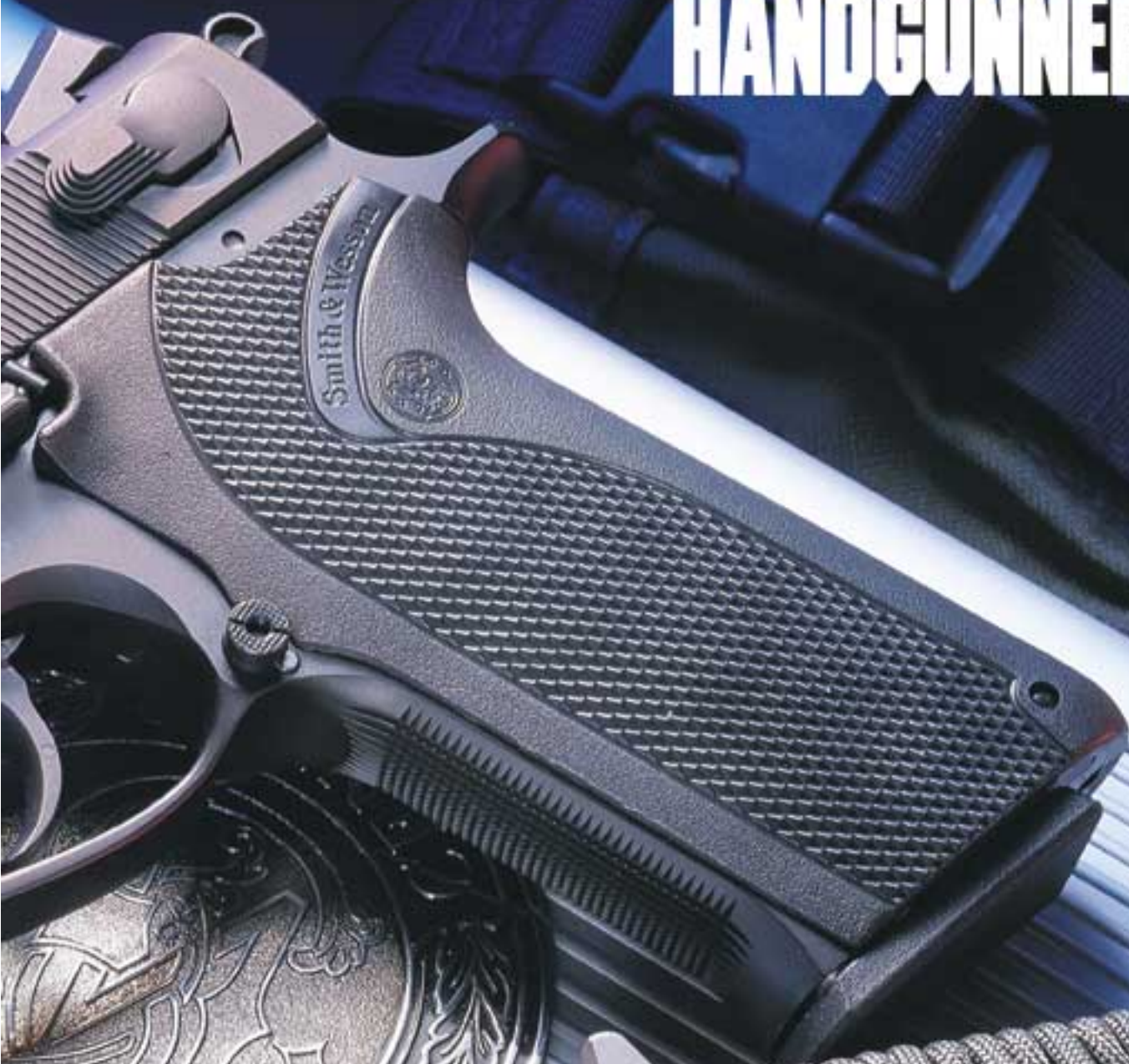
Indeed, there are those who prefer a conventional double-action auto, and the S&W Performance Center offers what may well be the most accurate, reliable and practical alternative to St. John’s anointed pistol. It is a custom version of the Model 4563, a slick 30 oz., matte black, carry gun with a sensible 4” barrel.

Playing on the popular appeal of spec ops terminology, the pistol is called the .45 CQB. There are two versions of the .45 CQB, an aluminum framed lightweight shown here, and a stainless framed version that adds a half-pound to your belt, weighing 38 ozs.

Continued on page 90



AMERICAN HANDGUNNER



THE ETHICS OF FIVE GENERATIONS

"It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend."

William Blake, English poet, 1804

"Screw Smith & Wesson. I won't be happy until I see them bankrupt and out of business."

Dave Licht, American Handgunner reader, 2000

Before we work ourselves into a stew over this issue's cover story on Smith & Wesson's Performance Center, we should remember that everyone here— you, me and the 700-plus employees of Smith & Wesson— agree wholeheartedly that S&W's decision to knuckle under to the government was a serious mistake. We agree that Smith & Wesson fell prey to government extortion, in the form of 29 different lawsuits, by volunteering to impose strict codes of business practices on its dealers and distributors. The agreement is a unilateral abrogation of rights— not just gun rights, but other fundamental prerogatives that exist in a free

Continued on page 96



Ginger's family has 238 years of service to S&W (L to R): Tom Kuschka (dad), Gail Kuschka (mom), Robert Demers (husband), Ginger, William Robinson (uncle), Dorothy Robinson (grandmother), Linda LaBier (aunt) and Warren LaBier (cousin).



Despite the proliferation of computerized manufacturing, a lot of handwork is still necessary to make a Smith a Smith.



Some of the forgings S&W makes in its plant. They include Harley-Davidson transmissions, Kimber frames and Weatherby bolts.

every spot on the barrel is re-cut by us."

Indeed, barrels destined for a PC pistol are rough machined in the main plant, gun drilled and rifled, but the PC cuts the chamber, crowns the muzzle and cuts the lugs. Each barrel is hand-lapped and honed. Fitting a titanium nitride spherical bushing, a PC innovation not found on factory guns, is an art in itself. It is done by hand, using a lathe to spin the barrel and a skilled touch with fine emery paper to polish the barrel to fit the bushing. Charlie Jeffroy specializes in fitting barrels and bushings to achieve what he calls a "slip fit, no shake." This means the bushing fits the barrel with virtually zero tolerance, as perfectly tight as two blocks in an Egyptian pyramid.

The result is phenomenal accuracy. The PPC gun, a customized 5906, is guaranteed to shoot 1" at 25 yards, but, truth-

fully, that would be an exceptionally bad one. Most shoot well under the 1" mark. The record is 5/16" for five shots, which translates to less than 1/2" at 50 yards.

"A lot of our handguns will out-shoot rifles at 100 yards," Kelly said without a trace of a smile. "I'm not kidding."

Revolvers are the bread and butter of the PC, and master gunsmith Jake Janocha (23 years with S&W, 8 years in the PC) is one reason why. Janocha was fitting a 12" Hunter version of the Model 629 when I toured the PC and I watched his expert hands fit the gun. It was an eye-opening experience.

Janocha was hand-polishing the sear using a stone when I arrived. "Most gunsmiths just clip springs to get an action job, but even if they stone, they're stoning into the hardened surface," Janocha pointed out, adding that the PC fits and polishes its critical parts, like the sear and

Continued on page 88



Master polisher Selmo Amaral works on a Schofield barrel. S&W recently diversified into bicycles for law enforcement.



A crate of Kimber slides, hammered on the massive S&W forge, await delivery. S&W's metallurgical expertise is second to none in the gun business.

BOYCOTT THE BASTARDS

The trouble with a consumer boycott against Smith & Wesson is where to start. Do we lynch S&W president Ed Schultz, who has stated emphatically that he and he alone made the decision? Or do we assume he's lying to cover for his overseers in England, the British company Tomkins plc that owns Smith & Wesson? Or is Schultz a mere pawn in a global game of antigun chess in which President Bill Clinton convinced Prime Minister Tony Blair to pressure Tomkins into forcing Smith & Wesson to sign?

If we decide to punish Smith & Wesson by refusing to purchase guns made in their factory, we better stop buying from Kimber and Weatherby too. S&W manufactures Weatherby rifles on a contract basis and sells components—slide and frame forgings—to Kimber.

If you want to cast your net a little further, you could reel in companies that do business with S&W, like Hogue Grips, Novak sights and MagNaPort. Wilson Combat should get blackballed too because the Arkansas gunsmith sells parts to the Performance Center for use on the Model 945. Custom handgun specialist Briley sells spherical bushings to the Performance Center too. Better scratch them from the Christmas list.

You won't be doing much shooting for awhile if you are serious about a boycott, unless you reload. Winchester, Federal, Remington, Black Hills and Blount all supply ammunition to the Massachusetts handgun maker. Don't use your Ransom Rest until further notice, either.

Maybe we should consider what would happen if a boycott was successful and we actually managed to put S&W out of business. Sarah Brady and Ted Kennedy would be laughing all the way to the morgue.

If you are in a battle and one of your comrades drops his weapon, do you simply kill him because he allowed a hole in your line? The only benefit would be to the enemy because there is now one less defender. By the same token, if Smith & Wesson perishes in a consumer boycott, the only winners are the antigunners.

Smith & Wesson is not a gray, monolithic corporation. Smith & Wesson is 700-plus workers who are proud to be part of an American icon of gunmaking, a company founded in 1852, progenitor of such classics as the Schofield, the Russian and the Triple Lock, innovator of the magnum, sponsor of countless matches, NRA events and arms exhibitions.

Does nearly 150 years of historic manufacturing get flushed with one bad decision? Or do we blame a legal system that allows such an asinine series of lawsuits to progress this far? Do we blame politicians with private agendas or a media devoted to advocacy journalism?

Hate the sin, but love the sinner. Smith & Wesson's agreement with the government was deplorable, but it was not worthy of crucifixion.



Less than a month after the NRA castigated S&W for "betraying" gun owners, they cashed S&W's check to exhibit at the NRA show and continued to try to sell S&W advertising space in The American Rifleman. Nothing like putting your money where your mouth isn't.

COLLABORATIVE FOLDERS

Several knife companies are tapping the top custom knifemakers to create designs that offer the same sort of quality and excellence of a handmade blade, at affordable prices.

By Pat Covert

Photos By Ichiro Nagata

For aficionados of tactical folders, these are the best of times. The demand for combat pocketknives is at an all-time high, and nowhere is this more evident than in the heavy manufacturing side of the knife industry. It seems everywhere we turn there is a new cutting-edge factory tactical staring us in the face— and what's most impressive is the sheer quality.

Factories are using the top-shelf blade steels, leading-edge frame materials, and state-of-the-art synthetics to make knives that used to be reserved for the work of a custom knifemaker. Somewhat ironically, it is the custom tactical knifemakers and manufacturers together who are making all of this happen.

Custom collaborations between these two uniquely different sources have totally changed the face of the cutlery industry in the past few years. While the concept of factories hiring custom knifemakers isn't new, the recent explosion in custom-designed factory knives has gone off the scale.

A bit of history is in order. About 10 years ago a small group of custom knife-

makers were creating a new genre of knife called the "tactical folder." These were no-nonsense folding knives meant to perform utilitarian and combat duties in the field. These makers were exploring the use of alternative blade styles and the latest high-tech handle and frame materials to meet a new set of parameters not served by the market at that time.

Then two things happened that helped this new niche market gain steam. First, there were the ever increasing threats of anti-gun legislation brought on by a liberal administration. This brought about an increase in both firearms and knife purchases by consumers.

Second, about this time, the bottom fell out of the fancy art knife market and collectors were looking for an affordable alternative. Both consumer and collectors found what they were looking for in the tactical folder and there has been a robust demand for the knives ever since.

Custom factory folders are a win-win situation for all parties involved. From the manufacturers' standpoint— as cold as it may sound— it is a way to sell more knives



Benchmade collaboratives.

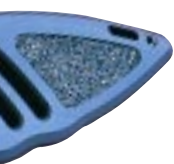




Boker



Micro-Tech



by allowing them to add the latest, cutting-edge designs to their catalog and play off the famous custom knifemaker's name. Nothing wrong with a little capitalist exploitation.

For the custom knifemakers, it's a way to make extra income from their designs and to get their name before the public for increased sales of their handmade knives. Not a bad deal to be exploited at a profit.

For consumers like you and me, it's an excellent way to buy a state-of-the-art tactical knife at an extremely good price, and you can't beat that! What follows is a collection of some elite manufacturer and knifemaker combos and their wares.

Benchmade

Benchmade was one of the first manufacturers to work with custom knifemakers. The company has featured famous names in their line for years,

including Mel Pardue, Allen Elishewitz and Pat Crawford. The worthiness of these efforts speaks for itself.

So successful has Benchmade been with such collaborations that many of the original nameplates continue in their line today. Benchmade's success, however, has not been built on custom knifemakers alone. The company was one of the first to offer tactical folders as their main line and their quality is second to none.

Benchmade, like the name suggests, hit the gate making factory knives that felt like well-constructed custom knives which, of course, are handmade at a bench. The company has kept pace by continuing to offer innovative designs in their knives, such as the new Axis locking system. Never one to sit still, Benchmade continues to put custom knifemakers to work in order to provide fresh material to their line.

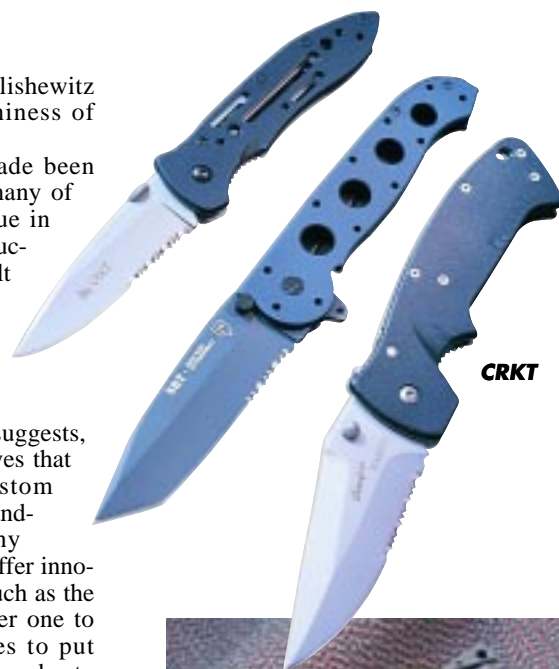
Most recently, Benchmade has teamed up with custom maker Warren Osborne and produced yet another winner. If you like your knives served up with a combination of style and bullet-proof construction, Benchmade has a tactical folder for you.

Boker Knives

Boker is a name many of us recognize for their "Tree Brand" pocketknives. The company is known worldwide for making top quality cutlery, but in the past few years Boker has been rewriting their own legend by adding cutting-edge tacticals to its repertoire.

Boker eased into the factory custom

Continued on page 83



CRKT



O.D.



Pistolsmith Alex Hamilton worships at the alter of accuracy, and his custom handguns prove his devotion.

By Mike Cumpston

10-Ring Precision



Alex Hamilton with a Rockwell testing machine, checking hardness on a Springfield Armory slide. It passed.

"Dedicated to the Metallic Arts of the Spiral Tube." So reads the logo of 10-Ring Precision, a multi-faceted enterprise that has become an icon in the world of dedicated handgun shooters. The founder and resident genius, Alex Hamilton, is a man for all seasons. Having gained a lasting foothold in the New York financial district, Alex forswore the Big Apple and moved his home base back to the Texas Hill Country. Here he could pursue his interest in hunting and shooting while directing his considerable talent and energy toward the custom gunsmithing needs of the most demanding of competitive pistol shooters.

In 1968, handgun competition was defined by bullseye shooting on the NRA course of fire. The pistolsmith's challenge was to optimize the accuracy of the target arms of the day with the primary emphasis upon morphing the Colt 1911 service pistol into a target arm. Alex entered the fray determined to provide the ultimate in precision at a minimum cost to the consumer.

Never quite satisfied with anything routine, Alex also took time to develop an in-line target pistol that he thought might prove appealing to a handful of competitive black powder shooters. The upper

unit consisted of a target grade octagonal barrel equipped with the same steel Micro sights as the first Ruger Flat Tops. The grip was a hybrid of the Colt 1911 and the Smith Model 41.

The arm was extremely accurate and became a much sought-after item in England and Europe. He was taken by surprise by the commercial success of the design. Alex was soon obliged to offer a flintlock variation. While no longer in production, these pistols are simple and of rugged construction. Many continue in regular use to this day.

The same questing nature that estab-

lished his worldwide reputation as a custom pistolsmith provides impetus for an enviable list of adventures. Alex' boondocking expeditions have taken him to every nook and cranny of the planet and include an Arctic photographic assignment with *National Geographic*, breakfast with the Prince of Nepal and fiduciary negotiations with bandits in the foothills of the Himalayas. He has a particular affinity for the African continent.

Death And French Fries

"There is nothing like the sight of a family of lions frolicking in the surf on the Namibian Coast with shoals of agate and semi-precious gems gleaming in the sunlight," Alex observed.

Dr. Kathleen Hamilton, Alex's spouse, had asked me if I had detected her husband's artistic vision. Yes, I assured her it was clearly manifest in his description of the West African shore.

Other memories of Africa are imbued by the ever-present odor of death around the human habitations and the smell of mopani pods— indistinguishable from that of cooking french fries— that permeates the wild places of the continent.

On one African trip Alex came to test the efficacy of the Texas Heart Shot on a Cape buffalo. Contrary to established wisdom, a .375 H&H solid is not particularly effective in this application. The affronted buff vented his rage on the Toyota Land Cruiser occupied by Alex and his native contingent.

These worthies understood the drill and proceeded to scatter in different directions while Alex took refuge on the offside of the heavy truck, which vehicle m'bogo promptly overturned. Alex was forced to address the problem at close remove and brought it to a successful conclusion with a couple of magazines from his bolt gun. The skull and horns occupy a special place in the Hamilton trophy room.

On a foray into northern Zimbabwe, Alex, his professional hunter and the camp tracker fell into the hands of a troop

Continued on page 74



Ralph Talbot tweaks his Ransom Rest. He's only had about 30 years to refine his technique. Ralph does all the accuracy testing for 10-Ring.



A Model 41 goes into a Ransom Rest. This device is the arbiter of accuracy, the Independent Counsel of bullseyes. Hamilton asserts that any properly fitted 1911 can shoot 1.5" at 50 yards from one of these babies.



A match-tuned 1911 gets the Slow Fire test.



Proper cleaning is essential for top accuracy.



Home Safety And Security

By Cameron Hopkins

You know the mantra—gun control laws don't work because criminals just steal their guns anyway. Hiding Old Bess under the bed or in the closet might work if you live in a rural area with virtually no residential burglaries, but even at that, you never know. Andrew Golden, 11, broke into his grandfather's house in Jonesboro, a rural community in Arkansas, to steal the guns that he and Mitch Johnson, 13, used to kill five and wound nine at Westside Middle School. Fat lot of good Gramp's glass-fronted, locked gun cabinet does when the bur-

glars come with crowbars, hammers and a cutting torch.

Safe and secure storage of firearms in the home is no longer a matter of common sense left to responsible adults. Federal law now mandates that all handguns be sold with a locking device of some sort which, we hasten to add, does not relieve you, the gun owner, from any further responsibility. Indeed, we have some reservations about the efficacy of some of the cheesy trigger locks that are tossed in with some new handguns simply to comply with the law.

Devices to store a firearm at home fall into three categories—locks on the guns themselves, portable containers and heavy steel gun safes. Prices range from a couple of bucks for a trigger lock to several thousand for a top-of-the-line gun safe.

Steel Safes

Clearly, the highest degree of safety is found in a steel gun safe. Avoid thinly constructed units that are more like glorified lockers than actual safes. Look for thick steel, at least 3/16" thickness in the walls and 1/4" on the door.

At minimum, a safe should weigh 600 lbs., preferably more. Obviously, the size and capacity of the safe determines its weight, but you want one that cannot be easily dollied.

Properly constructed steel safes offer fire

protection. Browning's Medallion Series, for example, provides 30 minutes of protection in 1,200° heat. Also, look for multiple locking bolts on the safe with the edges of the door recessed to prevent prying.

Ideally, the safe should be bolted to the wall. Drill holes in the side or rear and lag-bolt it in place.

A variety of interiors are available, ranging for Elvis-like crushed velvet to plain wood. Some models come with a molded fire-resistant sleeve for passing





The Life Jacket



an electrical cord to power interior lights and dehumidifiers.

Is a heavy, strong gun safe a guarantee against theft? Nothing is guaranteed, but it would require more than an hour of heavy duty pounding and jackhammering to get a good safe open. Burglars are businessmen, too. If they see a gun safe, they realize the risk-benefit ratio is not exactly running in their favor. A steel safe may not be impregnable, but it's as safe as you can get in a normal residence.

Portable Containers

We might catch some flak for the term "portable," but we simply mean any gun storage device that can be

picked up and carried away. Barring a burglary by Arnold Schwarzenegger, no one is going to pick up a 1,200 lb. safe and carry it off.

We refer to the many different types of lockable boxes that can be bolted to the wall, screwed to a desk or nailed to a shelf. But we consider a pry bar to be a basic tool of the burglary trade and we would not trust our guns to anything that can be crowbarred off a stud.

This is not to say that the boxes aren't useful. To keep little fingers off of a nightstand pistol, a box is preferable to a trigger lock. Out of sight, out of mind.

Indeed, some containers are designed to be out of sight. For example, the Bed-Vault is a lockable drawer that slips under a bed. Others fit between studs in the wall and can be covered with a picture or hanging clothes. Just don't confuse "hidden" with "theft-proof." It doesn't take a burglar with much more than a room temperature IQ to look under the bed or in a closet for valuables.

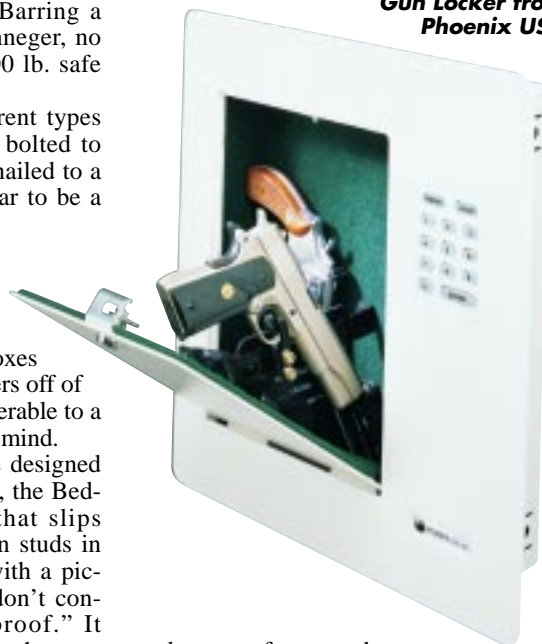
Trigger Locks

Newspapers from coast to coast carried the story on page one: Master Lock is recalling 750,000 trigger locks after it's discovered that the locks can be pried off with bare hands. A trigger lock can be either external like the Master Lock or internal like those found on new Taurus and Steyr pistols. Neither will prevent theft.

Keeping guns safe around children is a valid issue, and trigger locks, we suppose, can prevent a child from accidentally firing an unattended weapon. However, we agree with the NRA and with Massad Ayoob—the proper solution to children and guns is education. Ayoob literally wrote a book on the subject, shortly after his second daughter, Justine, was born. It's called *Gunproof Your Child*, a far better solution, Ayoob says, than "childproofing" the gun.

Trigger locks do not speak to security,

Gun Locker from Phoenix USA



only to safety, and we simply do not accept the proposition that gun safety can be left to any physical device. Safety lies between the ears, not the hands, as Jeff Cooper so aptly put it. The recall of the Master Locks pretty much proves our point without harping on it.

Bottom Line

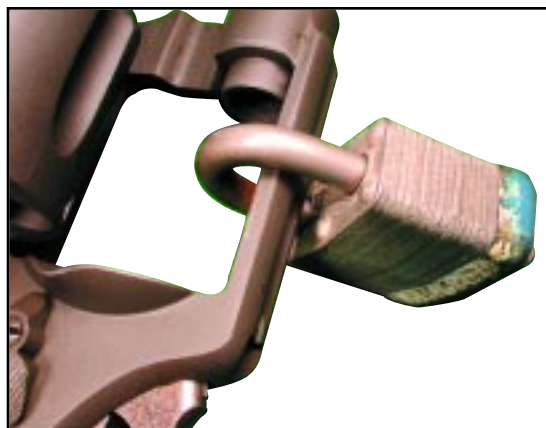
Safe storage of firearms at home is one of those problems that can be solved simply by throwing money at it. If you can afford it and you live in a metropolitan area, we would advise a monitored burglar alarm system, backed up with a steel gun safe. If you live in a rural area with low burglary incidence, just a gun safe will suffice.

If cash is tight, one of the portable containers will get you by until you can afford a nice steel safe.

Remember, those glass-fronted cabinets with the ducks carved on the front are nice to display your guns... so the burglar can inspect which ones he wants to steal.



Mossberg Safe Systems



Simple is as simple does. A padlock can render a revolver unfireable as well as any "trigger lock."

HUMANOID!

SIMPLE AND SOPHISTICATED SILHOUETTES FOR SURVIVAL SHOOTING.

By Andy Stanford

Many of today's common silhouette targets can trace their roots to police training and qualification courses. Some of the early examples depict a person with one hand behind his back. Just why is anyone's guess, but even the "Recruit's Target" pictured in *Shooting To Live* by Fairbairn and Sykes features an indigenous thug firing from the hip with his free hand behind his back.

Colt T-8: The classic American example of this type of asymmetrical silhouette, the large Colt T-8 target, represents the prototypical law enforcement qualification silhouette. It dates back to the first half of the 20th century, and was the official police competition target of that era.

The "K-5" zone of the T-8 is extremely generous, delineated by a line that traces the edge of the torso and head. A circular "5x" ring in the center provides a better indication

of street survival shooting.

B-21E Police Target:

The T-8's smaller cousin, the B-21E, is currently used for police qualification in Florida and elsewhere. It has no X-ring, and the 5-zone is still overly large relative to the vital area of *homo sapiens*. Due to the political incorrectness of firing at black targets, this design can be purchased in a variety of colors. Here in the Sunshine State, the hue of choice is blue, and will probably remain so until the Smurfs file a class action complaint.

B-27 Silhouette: In the same general category, but picturing an adversary with both arms hanging at the side, the B-27 silhouette has served as the official target for PPC since the 1960s. Overall, the symmetrical B-27 is quite large, but the oblong, concentric scoring zones—derived from the Olympic international rapid fire target—taper down to an X-ring that is smaller than a man's heart. Unfortunately, this high scoring area is located at diaphragm level, as opposed to its proper place at mid-sternum.

Echo Target: The U.S. armed forces, too, shoot at man-shaped targets, for obvious reasons. Gen. George S. Patton insisted that his troops practice on replica humanoids instead of bullseyes. Today, the plastic or cardboard "E" silhouette, used for field firing, is probably the most common example in our country's military.

Like the T-8 and B-27, the outside dimensions of the Echo target are very optimistic. Additionally, it could use an X-ring to encourage center hits.

The Army's standard rifle course fea-



Bill Rogers' steel reaction targets.



IDPA, anatomical and IPSC targets (L to R).

tures various silhouettes that pop-up at ranges between 50 and 300 meters. For reduced distance rifle-firing on bases that have only pistol ranges, a scaled down target featuring 10 appropriately dimensioned miniature silhouettes is placed at 25 meters.

The Marines shoot at a half silhouette, the "D" target, at 200 and 300 meters, and a full Echo target at 600.

Cooper's Influence

The next major sub-group of silhouettes was pioneered by Jeff Cooper. These are the buff cardboard targets used in IPSC and IDPA competitions. The initial design was clearly influenced by the aforementioned military silhouettes, no doubt due to Cooper's Marine Corps experience.

These targets have undergone a three decade evolution into the variants ventilated at modern matches. In the early days of the South West Combat Pistol League, the official practical pistol silhouette was a simple squarish silhouette sporting a 10" X-ring in the middle of the chest. Each target had to be cut by hand from mattress cartons or similar stiff stock, then the





scoring zone penciled in using a template. The dimensions are detailed on page 115 of the classic text, *Cooper on Handguns*.

IPSC Targets: With the advent of IPSC, two versions were sanctioned: the Item target, which featured a 6"x18" rectangular A-zone and 3" wide "arms," and the Option target, which continued the familiar circular A-zone theme. The first prefabricated examples appeared around this time, a development welcomed by those tasked with match logistics.

Next came the Milpark target, named for the South African suburb where it was adopted during the 1981 IPSC World Championships, another circular A-zone variant which bears a striking resemblance to today's IDPA silhouette.

Then came the Florida 8, so named for its central 8" circle, followed by the latest IPSC target—originally called the Brussels target. The IPSC target returns to an Item-esque 6" wide rectangular box in the center of the chest for the maximum scoring area.

Competitive "practical" shooting will

likely witness a further slide down the slippery slope of sanitization first seen with another member of this family tree, the Bianchi Cup's R2-D2 target. IPSC recently approved the Classic target, a headless, distended cardboard octagon—dubbed the Amoeba by our editor-in-chief—as an alternative for regions that frown on firing at humanoids with heads.

On the other end of the spectrum, cartoon and photographic targets depict a human assailant as explicitly as possible. Not surprisingly, these live-fire visual aids are most often employed by the tactical training community.

World class instructor John Farnam was an early advocate of the Duel-a-Tron cartoon targets, which even made a controversial appearance at the 1979 IPSC Nationals in Park City, Utah.

Likewise, the Gunsite Fun House has been populated with color Belgian police targets since Cooper founded the American Pistol Institute in Paulden, Ariz. in the mid '70s.

A lifesize photograph provides the most accurate two-dimensional representation of a human subject. The photo targets from Speedwell and others include a panoply of potential provocateurs: male and female, armed and unarmed, all races and ages. One hostile target even depicts a pregnant women with a gun!

In the words of sci-fi author Orson Scott Card, "The essence of training is to allow error without consequence." Used appropriately in full surprise exercises—where the shooter does not see the course layout beforehand—such silhouettes can play a valuable role in teaching students to make correct shoot/no shoot decisions under stress.



Would you light up a pregnant woman with a gun? How about a man with his back turned, holding a pistol? Decisions, decisions...



The Flying M is a bayonet charge of a stage with the shooter moving toward the targets. Shooting fast and accurately, while moving, is a fundamental skill that "games" like the Steel Challenge require.



King Doug and his crown. Koenig, we hope it goes without saying, means king.

MAN OF STEEL

Doug Koenig wins the 2000 World Speed Shooting Championship, capping a stellar year for the Bianchi Cup Champ.

Photos and Story By Nyle Leatham

Fresh off a victory at the Bianchi Cup, professional shooter Doug Koenig of Team Leupold won the 2000 Steel Challenge with a Leupold red dot scope atop a single-stack 1911 in .38 Super. The win marked Koenig's second trip to the winner's circle in this chameleon-like match that seems to have a magic attraction for action shooters.

The difficulties inherent in staging a big match are formidable. It seems a miracle some of these shooting championships ever happen. You've got to have real estate where shooting is legal and tolerated by the local citizenry. It's got to be accessible with a major airport within driving distance and suitable lodging near the range. It's also nice to have tourist attractions nearby.



King Doug and his partner in the shootoff, which pairs the top 16 shooters into two-man teams for additional cash and prizes.



USPSA president Michael Voigt is the first Master class shooter to lead the organization.

Most of all, you need strong backs and willing volunteers from the host club to serve as range officers, score checkers, parking coordinators, T-shirt sellers and other support roles. A good, active club is essential.

You also need the support of sponsors. Ah, the beauty of a groaning prize table laden with everything from expensive custom guns to checks for thousands of dollars for the top winner to a memento still worth more than the entry fee for the last place finisher.

There is no event that better illustrates the ups and downs of running a big match than the Steel Challenge. Founded by Mike Dalton and Mike Fichman in the late '70s, the match was a radical departure from any other shooting contest ever held— an all-steel target speed shooting match. Stages would be fast to run and easy to score, based on pure time and with time penalties for missing. Ringing steel would attract shooters from far and near.

The format promised fast, demanding handgun shooting with only minimal physical movement on a couple of the stages. It would be great training for skill and dexterity, but less controversial than other “combat shooting” matches. The targets would not be humanoid and the stages would not be scenario-based like IPSC.

The Steel Challenge quickly rose in



JoJo Vidanes scoots into another shooting box on Outer Limits, another stage with movement.

prominence to be considered one of the “big three” matches on the practical shooting circuit, along with the IPSC Nationals and the Bianchi Cup. *American Handgunner* referred to the three matches as the Triple Crown when an upcoming young shooter named Rob Leatham won all three in 1985. No one objected to the comparison to the Belmont, Preakness and Kentucky Derby—indeed, these matches were the cream of the handgun racing world.

The Steel Challenge developed its own unique character and following. Gunsmiths began to build “Steel guns” with specially lightened slides to swing faster between plates. Loads were reduced to anemic levels because there is no power factor in the speed shooting format. Competitors even began to think of themselves as primarily “Steel shooters” and many specialized in shooting just this match.

One of the more dedicated groups of Steel shooters came from Japan where it is unlawful to own a handgun. Practicing with only air pistols firing plastic pellets, the Japanese Steel shooters have been coming to Southern California for the annual match for some 20 years now.

By the mid-'80s, the mountains just north of Los Angeles where the Steel Challenge had always been held were

falling prey to the bulldozers and earth movers of housing developers. The old Juniper Tree Range, home of the South West Pistol League, was getting crowded out along with the scenic Mexican land grant ranches around Santa Clarita. The owner of the range sold out, but he bought new land to open a replacement range.

However, big land deals take time. The Steel Challenge had to go somewhere. That somewhere was a small pheasant shooting club near Los Angeles. By 1988, the land deal went and the Steel Challenge moved to Holser Canyon. In the meantime, the South West Pistol League, which owned the rights to the match, had sold it to longtime shooting enthusiasts John Madigan and Don Hamilton. They ran the event successfully and then sold it to another party.

Among the changes the new owner initiated was a side-match called The Action Challenge. Another move was to classify the competitors, something that had never been part of the Steel Challenge tradition. This widened the gap between amateur entrants shooting just for fun and the professional hired guns who wanted to shoot for cash.

Hoping to make the Steel Challenge a paying proposition, the new owner thought the answer might lie in finding facilities in a lower-rent district. He moved the match out of Los Angeles to Bakers

field, Calif. When this didn't seem to work out, he moved the match to Fresno in 1993.

Even longtime Steel shooters began to reach their limits with this gypsy match hopping venues every other year. Bakersfield and Fresno, for those unfamiliar with California, are Hicksville cities, known mostly for their unbearable heat and desolate location. "If God was going to give the earth an enemy, he would insert it in Bakersfield," quipped one disgruntled shooter.

To the Steel faithful, it was becoming something other than the Steel Challenge they knew and loved. Prize money dropped off as sponsors learned how unpopular the new owner's policies had become. The last match was held in 1993, amid howls of protest and indignant remonstrations for change. It was not to be. The match folded.

All this time the two founders had never really been very far away, dropping in for a look, shooting an occasional match, helping out as advisors, certifying the prize table when it was suggested the new owner had filled his pickup with donated prizes and absconded. But now their beloved match was up for grabs, just wasting away as years passed. No one seemed brave enough to try to salvage it.

So the two Mikes agreed to come forward. A lot of delighted shooters expressed approval and said they would support having the original match back intact.

But it was a different day then, in 1997, than it had been in the mid-'80s when Fichman and Dalton had last ran the show. Reagan was president then, Clinton was in the Oval Office now. The firearms industry was feeling budget constraints for wave after wave of anti-gun laws and lawsuits. Sponsoring a match, especially a "failed" match that had fallen by the wayside, was decidedly down on the priority list. Would shooters really come back to an essentially outmoded '80s-style match just because Dalton and Fichman said they would?

Come they did, 116 in all, and the two Mikes put together the manpower and prizes for a fantastic rebirth match in 1997. Many previous champions from the '80s returned and continue to do so, as do many top men and women, champions in their own right, from IPSC, IDPA, SASS and other disciplines also coming to try their hand at Steel shooting.

These days, neither Mike is young any longer. Fichman underwent back surgery earlier this year and walks with a cane. Dalton is now a full-time cop. It is, really, more a time to plan retirement and play with grandkids than pick up Steel Challenge burdens again. But it's plain from the gleam in the eyes of the two Mikes, as they watch youngsters shoot the Steel Challenge, that it's a labor of love. "We're happy it's alive again," Fichman beamed.



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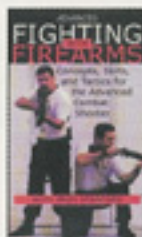
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PRECISION

Continued from page 65

of Soviet-supplied "mercenaries." The event caused international headlines as the mercs killed those members of the party who had begged for their lives.

Seeing that neither diplomacy nor clemency were particularly successful, Alex flourished the camp grocery list, announcing to the head man that it was a letter of safe conduct from President Mugabe. He convinced the AK-toting hooligans that any harm to himself or his companions would assure that the perpetrators would be killed, separated from their lives and forced to spend eternity as earth-bound spirits. While the leaders were examining the document, several of the troops were playing catch with Alex' Hasselblad and he demanded the immediate return of the camera and all of their camp equipment.

Brass prevailed where manners had not, and Alex and his associates emerged intact.

The Guild Connection

The guild was established by Jim Clark to develop and maintain the highest standard of artisanship and ethics in the pistolsmith's craft. Sponsored for admission by Clark, Alex became a prime mover in the Guild, serving as president and secretary for seven years. The Guild bestowed the ultimate honor in 1993, naming Alex Pistolsmith of the Year.

Alex became the focus of considerable controversy when he announced that he could build a 1911 that, given adequate shooting technique and optimum ammunition, would hold 1.5" groups at 50 yards. This revelation was not greeted with universal approbation in the trade as custom pistol makers found their customers expecting a new benchmark in handgun performance.

With the assistance of Ralph Talbot, Distinguished Master pistol shot and virtuoso of the Ransom Rest, he proceeded to prove the assertion over and over again.

10-Ring Precision offers a wide range of custom packages and options encompassing accuracy and reliability work on all quality handguns as well as custom built pistols for the most discerning shooter. Unwilling to confine himself to the 1911 platform, Alex delights in applying his custom touch to the full array of quality semi-autos as well as Smith & Wesson, Ruger and Taurus revolvers.

His penchant for versatility stands him in good stead as he is equally adept at optimizing IPSC pistols, concealed carry weapons, and the Ruger single-actions favored by the growing crop of cowboy shooters.

A particular specialty of the shop is mating target-chambered Lothar Walther barrel blanks to Smith 41s and other

domestically produced rimfire target autos. So altered, these custom barreled pistols are guaranteed to meet a 1" 50 yard accuracy standard.

During my recent visit to the shop, Alex showed me an STI based high-cap racegun which is part of an order made up for the Peruvian Olympic team. A member of the team visited the shop and contracted for eight of the .38 Supers. While there is no practical shooting event in the Olympics, the teams frequently hone their competitive skills by participating in precision shooting matches available in their home countries.

Alex stresses the importance of sound business ethics and customer satisfaction.

I also saw a 1911 with the grip frame finished in what appeared to be gold anodizing. Alex explained that this was actually an application of TR Gun Kote rendered in the appropriate color for a local shooter with realistic aspirations to a gold medal. This Olympian finds that practice with the .45 refines his shooting skills, making his rimfire results easier by comparison.

TR Gun Kote is a complex polymer containing the molybdenum disulfide that has supplanted teflon in terms of durability and lubricity. The product is resistant to chemicals, oils and solvents, temperature extremes and abrasion. While it has numerous industrial applications, it has proven particularly suitable for gun finishes.

Examples in the shop spanned the entire color spectrum from basic gun black to faux nickel. Properly applied TR Gun Kote falls between traditional bluing and electroless nickel in overall durability and is a particularly good hedge against corrosion and holster wear.

Sound Business

Alex stresses the importance of sound business ethics and customer satisfaction as key factors to success in the pistolsmith trade. He takes an incremental and cost-effective approach to handgun accuracy and will work with the customer to individualize his needs in optimizing his pistol.

If a factory rimfire barrel meets the 1" 50 yard accuracy standard, and many do, Alex will not try to sell you a barrel liner. If your 1911 barrel can be fitted to deliver a high level of accuracy, you may not need a custom-fitted Kart replacement, and Alex will tell you so. Likewise, custom accuracy work can be applied in stages with refinements added as the shooter develops his skill.



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A mild spring morning found Alex, pistolsmith Rick Corbin and this correspondent at the Camp Bullis Pistol Range. Ralph Talbot, a Distinguished Master competitive shooter and president of the Texas State Rifle & Pistol Association reserved the facility for the occasion.

Ralph, by virtue of his demonstrated skill with the Ransom Rest, has become the official gun tester for 10-Ring Precision. His experience with the Ransom device spans three decades and the scope of his knowledge of load development is encyclopedic.

A massive concrete pedestal, designed by Ralph and built *in situ* by the military, served as the platform for the rest. Talbot and Alex agree that 50 yard testing is a credible standard for precision handguns and that a hands-on approach is the best way to assure validity.

A Smith & Wesson Model 41 with a Lothar Walther barrel sleeve was selected for testing. Ralph mounted it in the rest, assuring equal pressure from the three tension screws. He placed a spacer at the back of the insert to prevent damage to the frame from the considerable pressure associated with rigid mounting.

Swinging the release mechanism out of the way, Ralph used his finger to trip the trigger. He has found that the mechanical triggering device sometimes functions much like a Hell-Fire switch, causing multiple discharges and invalidating the group.

During firing, Ralph kept one hand in contact with the back of the grip frame insert. This served to assure that the pistol returned fully to register after each round and to dampen vibration before triggering the next shot. It also allows the tester to maintain control of the pistol in the unlikely circumstance that a full-auto event occurs.

The Lothar Walther barrel sleeve met the accuracy standard with the highly regarded Federal Gold Ultra Match load.

Ralph then did preliminary testing of a 1911, confirming Alex' initial impression that the arm would need further fine-tuning before it would turn in the required 50 yard X-ring performance. Alex traced the problem to a buffered full-length guide rod specified by the customer. The nylon buffer had disintegrated, preventing the barrel lugs from fully locking up. With installation of a traditional spring and guide rod, the pistol demonstrated guilt-edged accuracy.

For a reasonable charge, Alex will provide the customer with a 50 yard test target and believes that this service should be available from all custom pistol shops.



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AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 38

Regaining his breath, Deputy Proctor focused on his survival. He knew now that these men were desperate enough to kill him to make their escape, and he had no backup on the way to help him. Strength and force had failed. He had to resort now to cunning. He told them that the keys they needed to gain their freedom were in the locked vault in the office—the locked box that contained his service pistol.

And now, they march him to the office. He explains that he can't open the vault with his hands tied the way they are, and they re-tie him, more loosely. As he seems to fumble to open the locked vault door, Proctor tells the Hit Man that the keys they need might also be in the desk drawer. It is Mcleod who responds and moves to the desk, with the Hit Man watching him. Their eyes are off the deputy for the moment.

He makes his move.

Ripping open the vault door, he snatches up the blue steel Browning in both bound hands, his right thumb wiping the safety catch down into the "fire" position as his right index finger goes to the trigger. Stabilizing his bound hands in the best shooting grasp he can get, Deputy Proctor fires twice.

One shot goes wild. The other copper-jacketed bullet tears a bloody but harmless groove on the edge of Mcleod's leg. And Deputy Proctor has run out of time.

The Hit Man is on him now. He gets the lawman in a wrist-lock and applies pressure with all his strength. Still tied hand and foot, Proctor is helpless to use any defensive tactics or gun retention techniques. He feels the gun being wrested inexorably from his hand. He growls at the Hit Man, "If you want it that bad, let go and take it."

But before he surrenders his grasp, he pushes the thumb lever back up to the "safe" position.

Angrily, the Hit Man takes the Browning and instantly grasps it in firing position. The deputy winces involuntarily as the convicted murderer pulls the trigger. The gun doesn't go off.

Time, the escapees realize, is running out. The deputy's two shots must have alerted other authorities. It finally occurs to them to search Proctor, and they promptly find the keys they need. Mcleod grabs a rifle he has spotted in the office, and the Hit Man still has the Browning. They leave Proctor behind, running down the stairs and out of the jailhouse, splitting up as they hit the streets of Cheyenne.

Armed Citizen Rescue

The fight has taken a lot out of the Hit Man. He runs only a few blocks before he is winded. He has to sit down



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to catch his breath. As he does, he surveys his surroundings.

There is good news and bad news. The good news is, he doesn't see any cops pursuing him yet. The bad news is, the street seems alive with citizens. They're looking at him as if they know who he is.

Why, they seem to be almost coming toward him as if to surround him. And they're not carrying newspapers or umbrellas. They're carrying handguns, rifles and shotguns.

The survival instinct still rules.

Instinct takes over. The killer raises the stolen Browning, aims, pulls the trigger. But the gun is still silent. Seeing his movement, the townspeople snap their own guns up at him like a firing squad.

The survival instinct still rules. The Hit Man knows he has a date with the executioner in three months, but three months is better than no time at all, and "no time at all" is what he's looking at right now.

Before the citizens open fire, the Hit Man puts down the silent Browning and surrenders. As the populace surrounds him, someone picks up the Browning. Its thumb safety is still engaged.

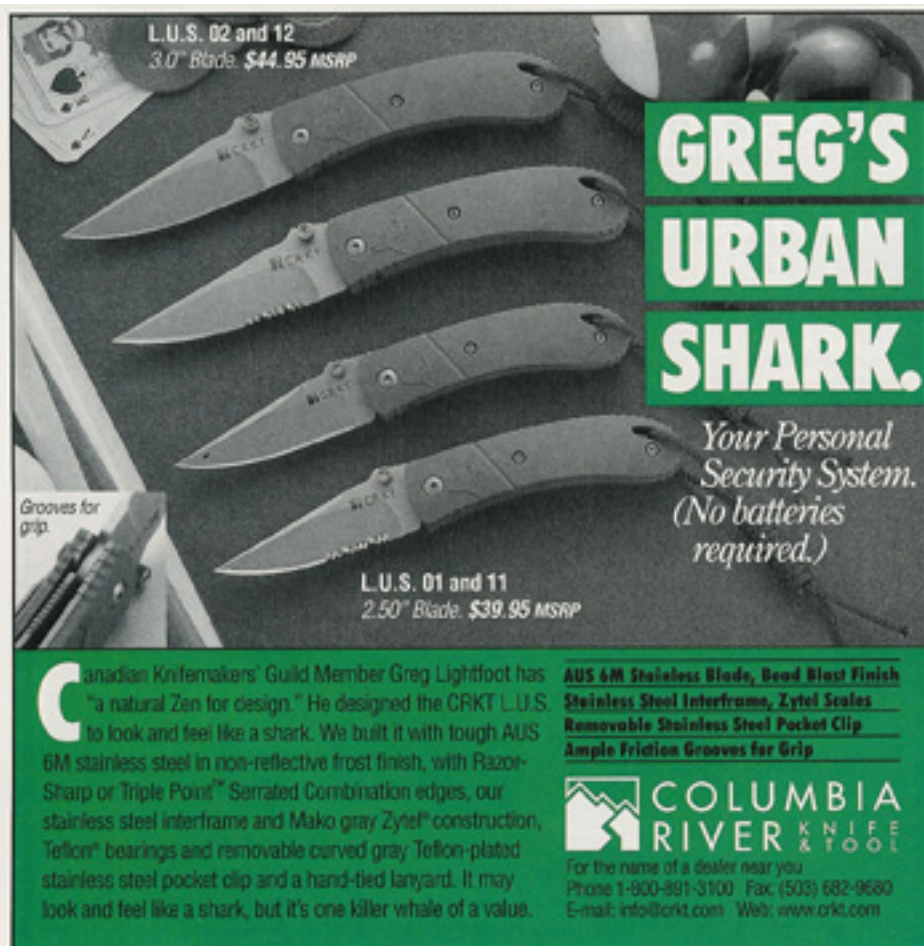
Time Capsule

It is August 9, 1903. The Hit Man is Tom Horn, considered by many historians the last of the wild west gunfighters. Proctor's life-saving cocked and locked pistol is a .32 caliber Browning Model of 1900. Three months from now, November 20, 1903, the day before Tom Horn's 43rd birthday, it will be Deputy Sheriff Richard A. Proctor who slips the noose around the killer's neck.

The incident at the Cheyenne jail is generally believed to be the first case of a good guy being saved when a bad guy got his semiautomatic pistol away and didn't know how to take it off safe to shoot it. It would be far from the last.

There has been a lot of historical confusion over the strange, "newfangled" gun that Horn took from a deputy but couldn't make fire. Many have presumed it was a Luger. The handgun in question was recently discovered by Western historian Lee A. Silva, in the possession of the deputy's grandson and namesake, Richard Proctor.

Notes Silva, "The Proctor family also has original copies of the August 9, 1903 *Wyoming Tribune 'Extra'* edition, which almost correctly describes the gun Horn took from Proctor as an automatic weapon of Belgian make, and the August



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10, 1903 Wyoming Leader which states incorrectly that the gun was a revolver but then correctly adds that the gun had been 'patented by Browning of Ogden (Utah) and manufactured in Belgium.'"

The pistol, a Browning design produced by Fabrique Nationale, is serial number 56666, Silva reports. It predated, and bears some resemblance to, the 1903 Browning-designed Colt Pocket Model, which began leaving the Hartford factory at about the time this incident took place. Both guns have a manual safety on the left rear of the frame.

The gun in question is chambered for .32 ACP. While Western lawmen of the period favored larger calibers and used revolvers almost exclusively, the .32 Long revolver cartridge was at that time standard issue for NYPD (in the small framed Colt New Police revolver) and in use by East Coast cops elsewhere.

A John Browning trademark, comfortable and discreet to carry.

Its use in the West would be seen as radical and sort of avant-garde, and in some circles, probably as rather effete. However, it did hold seven rounds in the magazine and an eighth in the chamber, and being very flat and thin in silhouette, a John Browning trademark, would be comfortable and discreet to carry in waistband or pocket.

Silva observes, "The Proctor gun probably rates as the second most historically important Belgian-Browning Model 1900 pistol, a distant second to the same model FN gun that was used by Gavrilo Princip to assassinate Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, Bosnia, on June 28, 1914 (an act that triggered World War I)."

The Hit Man

Tom Horn seems to have been a fascinating mix of good and evil, lionized in the movie bearing his name in which he was played by Steve McQueen, and vilified as a stone killer-for-hire by some Western historians. *The Gunfighters* says, "Tom Horn proved his gun hand as a deputy sheriff in Colorado. Then he worked as a roving gunman for the Pinkerton Detective Agency for four years (his reputed score of victims for that period was 17), and finally went off on his own as a cattle detective. He turned up in Wyoming in 1894, denying he had killed anyone for the Pinkertons and simultaneously offering the same lethal services to Wyoming cattlemen. His price varied, but he often charged \$500 for each rustler he shot. 'Killing

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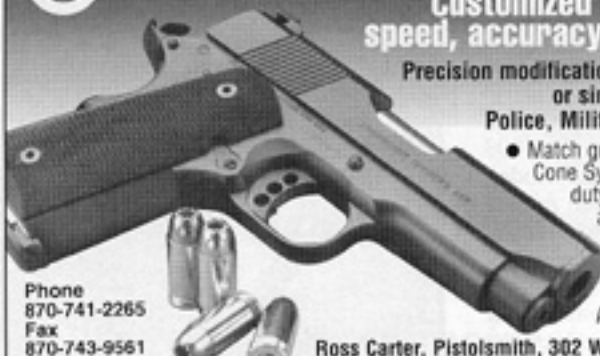
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men is my specialty,' he once said. 'I look at it as a business proposition, and I think I have a corner on the market.'"

Horn was not a walking bundle of pure violence. At one time an Army scout fluent in the Apache language, Horn has been credited with mediating the surrender of the great chief Geronimo to General Nelson A. Miles.

But it was as a killer of men that he made his reputation. His oft-quoted standard fee of \$500 per victim works out to approximately \$8,500 in current dollar value. Put another way, a senior officer of the NYPD would have been making around \$2,000 per year during the same time period.

After meting out vigilante justice to criminals for money, it was only a short step to killing decent citizens for the same motive. The shooting that ended Tom Horn's career was the death of 14-year-old Willie Nickell on July 18, 1901. The boy was the son of Kels Nickell, a sheep rancher that one of Horn's cattle baron employers had reportedly marked for death.

He was shot in the back one dimly lit early morning, and because the youth was about his father's size, riding his father's horse and wearing his father's coat, many theorize that Horn killed him by mistake, thinking that it was the senior Nickell in the sights of his lever action Winchester rifle.

He went to the gallows and was hanged for a murder he didn't commit.

In 1902, a suspicious Joe LeFors, working for the U.S. Marshals, got Horn blind drunk and talkative. Horn reportedly confessed to the Nickell killing in detail, not realizing that a concealed stenographer was taking down every word. After his arrest for the murder, he declared that his confession was just fictitious, drunken bragging, and that the stenographer had copied his words falsely in any case. The jury didn't buy that explanation, which is why he was sitting in the jail in Cheyenne awaiting the noose on the day he disarmed Deputy Richard Proctor.

The final footnote to this bit of history also belongs to Lee Silva. He writes, "There would be no escape for Tom Horn. He went to the gallows as scheduled and was hanged for a murder that many historians are still convinced he didn't commit. Whether the gunman was guilty or not, his fate might have been quite different had he only known enough to move a lever half an inch."



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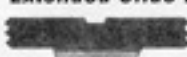
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COLLABORATIVE

Continued from page 63

market over a half-decade ago by collaborating with American knifemaker *cum laude* Michael Walker, the inventor of the original liner-lock so prevalent on many folding knives today.

Recently, Boker revealed a factory tactical designed by Walter Brend, one of the most respected names in the custom industry. Brend is known for his efficient blade designs and bullet-proof construction. His custom knives, both fixed blades and folders, are in high demand worldwide and command a commensurate price.

Boker's Brend series of tactical folders doesn't disappoint. The company has infused Brend's penchant for sound design and solid construction directly into their manufactured versions.

Boker's line of tacticals by Michael Walker and Christian Wimpff are every bit as nice. A staunch warning, however. Despite their apparent thoughtful design and good looks, these knives have to be handled to be fully appreciated. They have a feel of precision rarely found in any type of folding knife.

Columbia River Knife & Tool

CRKT is a rising star in the knife-making industry. This relatively new company has zoomed to notoriety over the last few years by delivering quality bang for the honest buck.

CRKT got its feet wet in the factory custom market early on in their short history by hiring custom knifemakers like Jim Hammond, Ed Halligan and Kit Carson to add their design expertise to their fledgling line. Their most recent additions include the work of Greg Lightfoot, Pat Crawford and Brian Tighe, all of whom have been featured in past issues of *American Handgunner*.

What's amazing is that CRKT has been able to consort with these noted makers and bring their designs to fruition at such an extraordinarily reasonable price. A typical CRKT designer folder can be had, in many cases, at half the cost of its competitors with no discernible difference in quality.

The company also has a knack for broadening its appeal by offering a selection of handle materials to please a wide range of users, from the budget-minded to the techno-lover. For instance, the popular Kit Carson M16 model can be had in affordable Zytel or hi-tech carbon fiber. In addition, a choice of blade styles is often seen within a model line, further giving the consumer even more options. For sheer value, it's hard to beat a CRKT knife.

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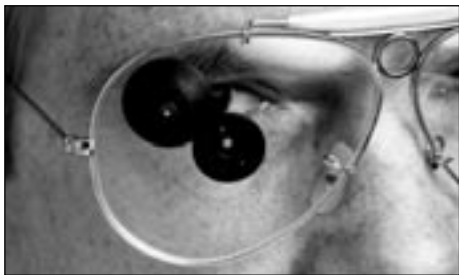
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training professionals, *Handgunner's* Massad Ayoob, James Keating, Graciela Casillas-Boggs, Michael Janich and Chief Jim "Patches" Wilson. All were folders except for Ayoob's "steak knife," a peculiarly thin fixed-blade.

The result of these collaborations was a lineup of top quality tacticals that was extremely diverse and very well made to boot. Once the initial line was established, MOD turned to noted combat training expert Duane Dieter for a custom design. Dieter delivered with one of the most versatile designs that ever hit the tactical market.

The Dieter CQD offers features never seen on a tactical folder before, including a support blade built into its base. The consumer market reacted by opening their coin purses with great gusto and a second, smaller version was born.

The MOD line is not as extensive as some of the big boys', but the company more than makes up for it in their unique offerings, an admiral trait in a crowded market. The construction quality is excellent and the feel of a MOD knife is substantial. Lightweights need not apply.

Micro-Tech

Micro-Tech is another one of those overnight success stories. This company laid the groundwork for success by offering well-built and innovative designs, mostly of the "automatic" persuasion. It could easily be said that Micro-Tech offers the most wicked-looking knives on the market. If looks could kill, Micro-Tech would get the nod for best-dressed.

The last year has extended its line over the last several years, offering manual versions of their cutting edge self-opening designs to the masses along with exquisite limited editions of their knives to a hungry collector base. Their earliest collaborations included work with one of the true masters, Walter Brend.

Most recently, Greg Lightfoot has been called upon to design a tactical folder for their line. The Lightfoot model has added a new dimension to the Micro-Tech line, and hopefully we'll see more custom collaborations from this bright, forward-thinking company in the future.

Micro-Tech knives are of exceptional construction, rivaling many a custom knifemaker's art. In fact, to handle a Micro-Tech knife is like holding a piece of art. Except this art cuts. Very well.

Spyderco

Since introducing the first "knife with the hole in the blade" way back in 1981, Spyderco is recognized worldwide for manufacturing an extensive line of top-quality folders. The company has a huge following among law enforcement personnel who appreciate the quality and sensibility of their knives.

One of the first to solicit the design talents of custom knifemakers, Spyderco

has an extensive list of collaborators that reads like a who's who in custom knife-making. Just a brief glance at their catalog brings up names like Bob Terzuola, Frank Centefonte, Jot Singh Khalsa and more. Spyderco continues to add collaborations at a dazzling pace with no signs of letting up. Custom folders by J.D. Smith and Frank Keating are just two of their latest offerings.

It is often said, "The steam of the engine is the steam of the train." Founder Sal Glessner has kept Spyderco on a sound track by offering practicality and value in the line from the company's inception. Handle enough Spyderco knives and you'll notice a consistency in quality throughout. Such dependability is no doubt one of the key reasons that Spyderco has firmly entrenched itself not only in the law enforcement community, but among mainstream consumers as well.

When you purchase a Spyderco, you know what you're getting. Amen.

Choose Your Weapon

So how do you choose a tactical folder from the overwhelming selection available? You might start by setting your budget parameters. Prices of factory customs vary widely. The good news is that there is a nice selection for virtually any budget, large or small.

Next, study the selection available and determine which will be most useful for your particular needs. Some tactical folders are more useful for pure combat while others are friendlier for a variety of functions.

Size is also a major consideration. If you just need a "comforter" for self-protection, buy a knife with a blade size of 4" or less. Whenever possible, go to a cutlery retailer and attend knife shows to check the goods out firsthand. When it comes to personal satisfaction, there is no substitute for handling a knife before you buy it.

Also, before you purchase, check out the manufacturer's warranty. Most manufacturers offer a repair or replacement warranty with their knives for breakage under normal circumstances. This speaks a lot to the faith they have in their product.

If you've been hesitant about buying a factory tactical, wait no more. The competitive environment has created a buyer's market for tactical folders and the quality of knives available is simply astounding. Feast days are here!



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SIXGUNNER

Continued from page <None>

Colt, S&W was working on a large bore, cartridge-firing sixgun that would become the Model #3. Smith held the Rollin White patent that allowed revolver cylinders to be bored-through to accept fixed cartridges. Their .44 Model No. 3 was interrupted by the Civil War and was subsequently introduced in 1869.

Colt was caught flat-footed with a suddenly obsolete design and facing a patent that would not run out for several years. Colt saw the writing on the wall and brought forth the "cartridge conversions" of their percussion revolvers, a model called the Open-Top and, finally, the legendary Single Action Army.

**Shooting all
of these sixguns
was pure
pleasure.**

Now, to the point of my history lesson— today all of these guns are avail-
able in replica form from American Fron-
tier Firearms. These sixguns are made of
American parts and totally assembled and
finished in this country.

Frontier Firearms' "cartridge conver-
sion" models carry a retail price tag of
\$700. Why would you pay that much
when you can get foreign made replicas
in the \$400 to \$500 range? The answer
is: fit and finish.

It is virtually impossible to find an
American-made sixgun from any of the old
line companies that has a deep, high-polish,
blue finish. Remember the Smith & Wesson
Bright Blue? The Colt Royal Blue? Or the
original Ruger Super Blackhawks? All had
beautiful bluing. That's the quality of finish
now found on all Frontier sixguns.

Special care is also paid to the fitting.
Cock a sixgun and you will immediately
see what I mean. The actions are smooth.
As the hammer is cocked, one is almost
transported back to the 1880s when all
sixguns were handfitted and polished
inside for a buttery smooth feel.

I love to hand a properly tuned and
fitted single-action to someone who has
an out-of-the-box, rough-as-a-cob
single-action and watch the reaction as
they cock a tuned gun. It's a look of
pure joy.

Grips on the 1851 are well-fitted, one-
piece walnut that could benefit with an
oil finish being added. The shape of the
grips are the same as found on a Colt
SAA and the entire sixgun feels and bal-
ances much like my favorite 7½" Colt.

The .44 has a silver trigger guard, blue
backstrap, barrel and cylinder, with a case

colored frame and hammer. The blue is deep and dark, the case colors are breath-taking on both hammer and frame, and the one-piece walnut grips, while not a perfect fit, are very close.

As with the 1851 Navy, the action is smooth and rivals those found on six-guns worked over by the top single-action 'smiths.

Both the 1860 Richards and the Open-Top shoot to the same point-of-aim, which is on for windage and about 2" high when shot standing two-handed or one-handed, duelist style. That means they make a formidable pair for cowboy shooting.

The Open-Top, chambered in .44 Colt, is beautifully finished, but instead of case coloring, the entire sixgun is a deep blue all over. Only the hammer is case colored. Grips are again one-piece walnut of the same shape and size as an SAA. At the fear of sounding redundant, this sixgun is also very well fitted and timed and very smooth in its operation.

American Frontier Firearms is just now getting into their Single Action Army production. They had their first one, a 7½" .357 Magnum, at the 2000 SHOT Show and my test gun is the first in .45 Colt and bears the serial number of 003.

This is a beautifully finished sixgun with a deep blue and eye-catching case colors on frame and hammer, just like on the original Colt of 1873. It is as attractive a single-action as one is likely to find at any time from any manufacturer. The action is very smooth and the cylinder lock-up is tight with almost no movement. Grips are properly shaped, smooth, one-piece walnut and feel very good in my hand.

The only negative on this sixgun is that the backstrap is not radiused quite right where it bolts to the frame on both sides of the hammer. I expect this to be taken care of in subsequent examples.

Shooting all of these sixguns was pure pleasure. The .45 Colt shot just slightly to the right and low, so it can easily be filed in to hit point-of-aim.

Two problems surfaced with the .44 Colt sixguns used in testing. As mentioned, both guns shoot about 2" high. The company says it will fit all subsequent Cartridge Conversions and Open-Tops with a taller front sight to allow individual filing for elevation.

A second minor problem consisted of the screw that holds the loading gate in place on these models. This screw enters from the front of the base of the loading gate and when it backs out, the rims of the cartridge cases hit it and the cylinder rotates with difficulty or not at all. Loc-tite took care of it, but future sixguns, we are promised, will use a screw with a slight shoulder that will lock up tight.

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PERFORMANCE

Continued from page 60

hammer, before they're heat treated. This is one of those little perks that comes with working a stone's throw from the largest revolver factory in the world— you can walk your sears over and get them heat treated any time you want.

What this means is that a PC action job is going to last. The finely honed parts are hardened after they've been polished, so the polishing doesn't cut into the surface hardness.

Next, Janocha fit the cylinder to the yoke. It wasn't quite perfect, but a touch with a customized cutter— another one of those perks— and the parts mated perfectly. A tap with the babbitt and the yoke aligned perfectly in the frame window. How can Janocha know, just by look and by feel, that the fit is right?

"Experience," said Kelly. "These guys were revolver fitters before they came to the Performance Center." A revolver fitter is the ultimate job in the factory, the most skilled position in the entire plant. It's a job that many workers toil for years to finally reach. It's merely basic training for a PC revolversmith.

"The main plant just can't put this sort of handwork into an individual gun because they're just building too many. Here, we can afford to do that," Janocha said. The factory makes about 250,000 guns a year, compared to roughly 5,000 for the PC.

Janocha said there are four aspects to a PC revolver that make it so accurate. First, the PC installs a precision ball and detent lockup on the yoke, something totally absent on factory guns. This makes the revolver's lockup more positive and precise. Second, the forcing cone is handcut for uniformity. Third, the barrel crown is also cut by hand. Lastly, the barrel-cylinder gap is set by a master gunsmith, usually between .004" and .005".

The Schofield 2000 revolver is made entirely in the PC. Perhaps no other single gun embodies the full scope of the talent pool of the PC than the Schofield. No plans or drawings existed for the 1875 version of the Model 3 Smith & Wesson. Named for Lt. Col. George W. Schofield, the revolver was sold only to the military; a total of only 8,969 were manufactured.

PC chief engineer Mochek and Schofield project engineer Rich Picard visited S&W historian Roy Jinks who happened to own a mint Schofield. They borrowed the gun and took it apart, carefully measuring every part and inputting the dimensions into the computer. Using a process called "solid modeling," all the parts were then reduced to blueprints with specs for the CNC equipment.

Because they didn't have liability lawyers in 1875, Picard was obliged to design a hammer block safety into the Schofield 2000. A rotary spring hammer block was the result, a complicated little

piece that looks like a snail. After Picard was finished modernizing the Schofield on the inside, only one part remained unchanged, the main spring.

Schofield frames are forged in the main plant and come to the PC roughly 60 percent finished. The barrels, a very complicated part, are made in S&W's Houlton, Maine, plant and then finished in the PC. The historic revolvers are then hand-fitted and hand-finished in the time honored, traditional manner.

Finishing Schofields has been almost a religious experience for master polisher Selmo Amaral (25 years S&W, 3 years PC). Amaral had to make custom polishing wheels to fit the convoluted contours of a Schofield barrel. "I wonder how they did them back then. I mean, this goes back 125 years. What wheels did they use? I would love to know," Amaral said.

To watch the steady hand and patient eye of a polisher is to step back in time to an era when waterwheels powered the old factory. Leather harness belts ran overhead in a maze of constantly turning confusion. Machine operators had to keep a sharp watch when they adjusted their tools because once the giant waterwheels started up again, there was no stopping those polishers and presses.

Steve Roach is a mere youngster in the PC scheme with only 14 years at S&W, four in the PC. His skill at the polishing wheel was soon evident though, and today he is entrusted with the sideplates of the Schofield, an expanse of flat steel that is a polisher's worst nightmare. "Believe it or not, a flat surface is much harder than a round one," Roach observed. "How did they make the Schofield back then? I don't know. But we try to make the guns look authentic."

"They still polish the way we did things 30 or 40 years ago," said Kelly. "There is no way to polish a Schofield barrel in the modern way— not with those barrel angles. We had to make the wheels to match those angles."

Kelly said production of the Schofield is hoped to be 100 guns a month. To see what went into the design of this old classic, to witness the skill and care that go into making one, is to appreciate the unique connection this \$1,400 break-top single-action revolver represents to linking the past with the present Smith & Wesson.

Tom Yost, a master class IDPA competitor who shoots a PC pistol, said, "A custom gun is usually a retro-fitted 1911, but these guns are made from scratch. Every time you shoot a Performance Center pistol, you can feel the pride that goes into every gun."

There in the square building in back of the main plant, a smell permeates the air, the scent of machines, the odor of sweat and oil. The smell is not unpleasant. It is the perfume of history, the cologne of time. It is the essence of the Smith & Wesson



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THE .45 CQB

Continued from page 57

Both versions are single-stack pistols holding 8+1 rounds of .45 ACP yawnmouthed hollowpoints. The sights are the superb Novaks, but they lack tritium inserts, which a pistol designed for close quarters battle should have. Write that down, for it is the sole complaint we could find on the .45 CQB.

The slides of the .45 CQB and the stainless version's frame are forged and rough machined in the main plant; the aluminum version's frame originates from an extrusion. From there, the components are brought to the PC for final manufacturing on the PC's own CNC equipment.

The slide and frame rails are cut to precision tolerances that PC engineer Rich Mochak calls "slip fit, no shake." Basically, this means the fit is so tight, they won't function unless they are hand-lapped together. All PC autopistols feature hand-lapped frames and slides.

"The bonus of hand-lapping," remarked Tom Gordon, team leader of the auto division of the PC, "is that a lot of the recoil is absorbed in that sort of fitting. When you don't have a slide that wants to lift off the frame, it shoots a lot better."

When the Shorty .45, an aluminum framed .45, was first introduced there was some concern that the frame wouldn't take the pounding of the bigbore cartridge. Not to worry, says Gordon, they took a sample, a 28 oz. pistol, and shot 5,000 rounds with zero measurable wear.

The barrel is forged, rough machined and rifled in the main S&W plant, but the crucial dimensions are cut in-house by skilled PC gunsmiths. The chamber is cut at the PC along with the muzzle crown and the lugs. "The key to our guns is the fitting," Gordon added. "Just about every spot on that barrel is re-cut by us."

I was impressed to see the amount of handwork that goes into a .45 CQB. Shaun Sullivan, a gunsmith with 20 years at S&W and two years at the PC, was stoning the sear of a Model 945 when I toured the PC recently. His methodology and technique were identical to what I have seen in Bill Wilson's shop and Les Baer's shop—hand-fitting a crucial component with the skilled eye of a practiced master. "After working at Smith & Wesson for 20 years, I can finally say I make guns," joked the affable Sullivan, referring to his lengthy tenure as a tool maker in the main plant.

Similar handwork goes into the fitting of the Briley titanium-coated spherical bushing that is mated to each barrel individually. Charlie Jeffroy was working on a lathe, using emory paper to carefully polish a barrel to fit the bushing. It took several repetitions, with ever finer paper, to get the precise sort of "slip fit, no shake" snugness that is the hallmark of PC quality.

The spherical bushing is an ingenious

Continued on page 95

GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

HAWKEYE BORE SCOPE

For several months now I have been learning a lot about barrels. One tool needed for this experience is some way to see inside the barrel. The Hawkeye Bore Scope meets that need very handily. With it you can examine in minute detail the tops of the lands and the bottoms of the grooves and that all-important corner that divides the two. You can see whether or not your cleaning practices are adequate and, over a long period of time, track barrel wear.

The Hawkeye Bore Scope takes advantage of fiber optic technology and a little mirror to let us see inside. Power is supplied by a modified Mini Maglite that connects to the fiber optic tube, eyepiece and light source. Over that slips another tube with a tiny mirror at the business end. This can be rotated to permit a 360° view.

Pick out a 12 o'clock position on the barrel. The scope is placed all the way through and then drawn slowly outward following a single groove. You have to coordinate your eyeball with your hand to compensate for the rifling twist, but it's not hard to learn. The field of view is wide enough to let you see the whole groove as well as the corners of the land. The procedure is repeated for the next groove and so on.

Using the Hawkeye Bore Scope is easy; interpreting the information is not. You simply can't look at a bore and pronounce it accurate. You have to test the gun and correlate that data with your observations. You can, however, frequently predict the ones that *won't* shoot by noting obvious defects in the bore. This is a pretty expensive tool, but for the serious student it's invaluable.



For more information contact Gradient Lens Corp., 207 Tremont St., Rochester, NY 14608; phone: (800) 536-0790; website: www.gradientlens.com

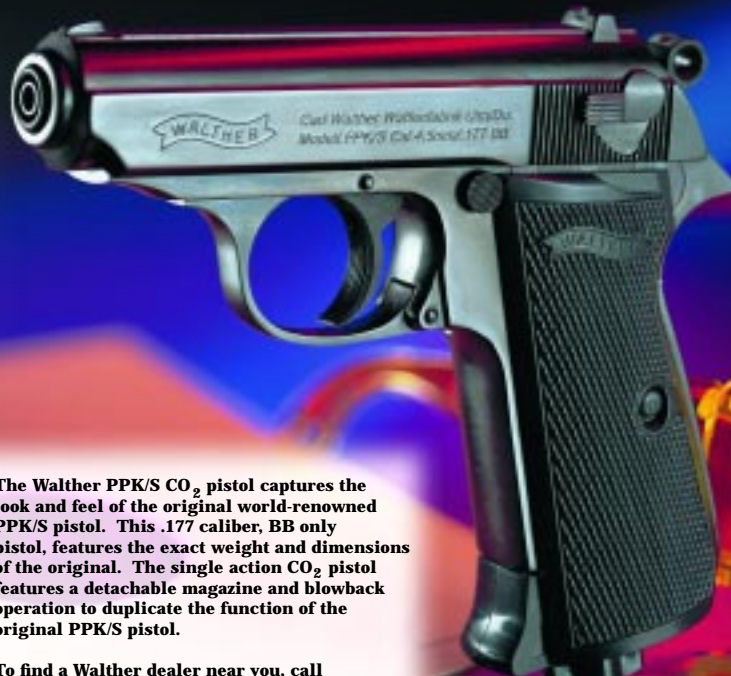


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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

DILLON HP1 MUFFS

The use of electronic earmuffs has grown by leaps and bounds over the last few years. Not only have they become smaller and lighter, but the electronic circuitry is being refined as well.


The Dillon HP1 muffs are very compact, a nice blue in color, can be comfortably worn while shooting rifles or shotguns, collapse into a convenient size and have a noise reduction rating of 21 dB. Each side has a separate mike, switch/volume control, and battery compartment (AAA size). The use of more common batteries is a nice touch, but so far there's nothing particularly remarkable.

Dillon's literature states that the electronic circuit, "Amplifies weak sounds while at the same time blocking out loud, harmful noise. During loud noises the HP1 maintains a comfortable level of sound transmission. HP1 Hearing Protectors are designed to never completely shut off."

When I first started using them it was obvious that ambient sounds were easily heard— amplified if you wanted them so— but noise reduction from a gunshot was very effective. The "never shut off feature" was not immediately apparent.

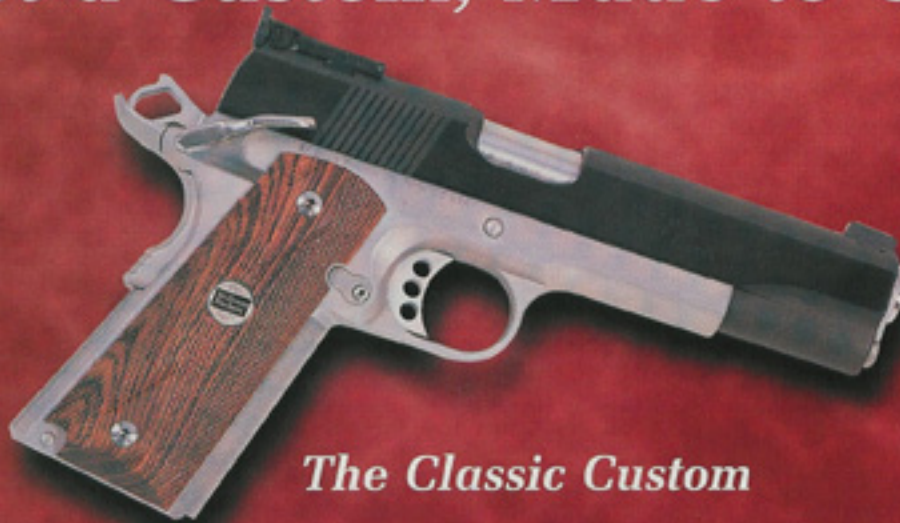
Some time later a friend came up and started talking in the instant immediately after I had fired a shot. I heard his voice clearly, albeit faintly, but the sound obviously was coming from the speaker, not outside. Then, almost magically, his voice got louder until it reached normal levels. Then I fired another shot— he was still talking— and the same thing happened again. It only took a fraction of a second but you could really hear the effect of the electronics.



The first time I used them I did a comparison, with power off, to some standard earmuffs. The Dillon was equal  to or better than those.

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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

BIANCHI RANGER TRIAD ANKLE HOLSTER

Over the years I have tried, and dismissed, a number of ankle holsters. My objection to most was that they didn't want to stay in one place. Either they would wobble around as I walked or slip down and land on my ankle bone. That never felt good. But sometimes the ankle holster is the best way to carry a gun.

Bianchi's new Ranger Triad ankle holster is a high-tech solution, with a couple of features that address my complaints. It might be best to describe the Triad as a clamshell with a holster sewn on. Inside the shell is a pad that is adjustable. The pad shapes itself to your leg and the bottom can go inside a sock. This really takes care of the discomfort.

The clamshell wraps around the ankle and the method of fastening provides the name—Triad. There are three straps; two slide through from left to right. The third, which is directly attached to the holster, goes the other way. What this does is pull

the gun in against the leg and keep it from flopping around.

To me, that is the best thing of all. Even with a lightweight gun in there, the weight of the gun, following Mr. Newton's law, wants to keep going when your leg stops. I've never been able to get to the point where I didn't notice that, but

the unique Triad design is a great improvement.



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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

COLUMBIA RIVER KISS CLASSIC, M-16-13

The first time I saw the Columbia River Kiss Classic folder I said, "There's no way I'm gonna put *that* in my pocket." My reason was that I'm a klutz with knives and cut myself much too regularly. The fact that one side of the blade is just "out there" gave the impression that one would get cut. Not so.

CRKT have a unique way of grinding and sharpening the blade and blending it, just so, with the back stainless steel handle. You can run your finger over the blade at will with nary a drop of blood to be shed. Part of the back also serves as a positive spring latch for the blade. It could be carried clipped into the pocket or waistband, but the small size (3" blade, 3½" overall) would let it work very nicely as a money clip too.

The second knife of theirs that I'm using is the M-16-13. This is a much more traditional-looking folder with a couple of attractive and innovative fea-


tures. Even though the overall length is 3.56", the blade is almost as long, so no space is wasted. Handles are machined of aircraft grade aluminum with a stainless steel liner/lock.

A neat feature is the "Carson Flipper" (for designer Kit Carson) that is just a little hump on the back of the blade. It protrudes through the back of the knife and provides an easy way to get the blade started in the opening process.

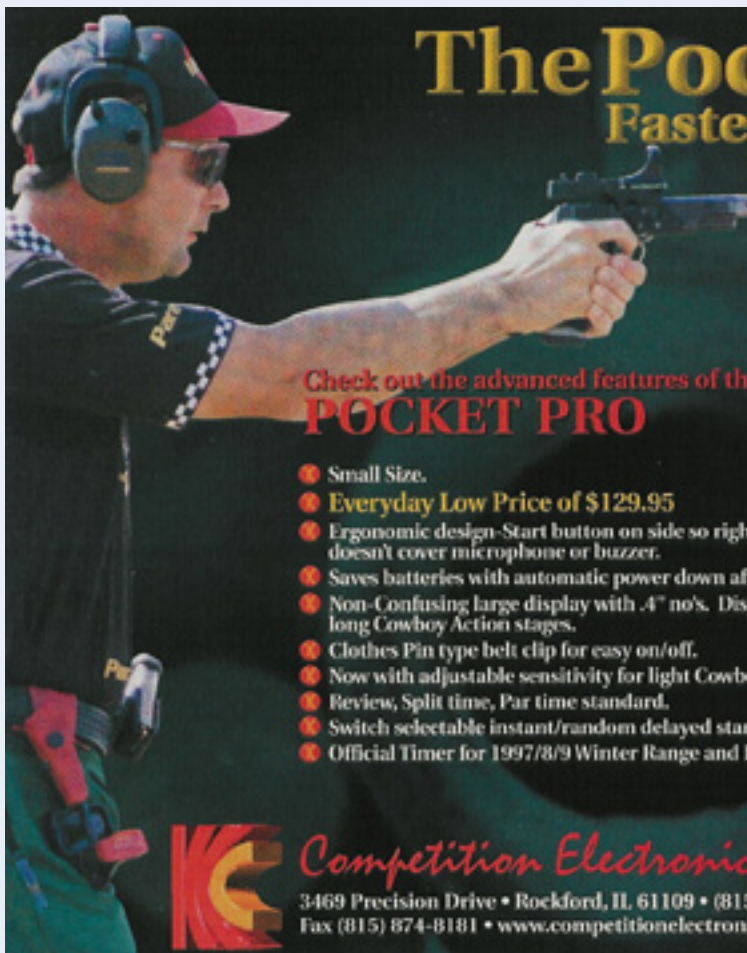
That there are no protrusions on the side of the knife, as some openers are built, so you start the opening sequence by pulling back on the flipper with your forefinger to get it going and then pick up the



somewhat smaller conventional opener and complete the process with your thumb.

It's quick and easy to learn. The M-16 is riding in my pocket right now and I never know it's there. 


For more information contact Columbia River Knife & Tool, 9720 S.W. Hillman Court, Suite 805, Wilsonville, OR 97070; phone: (800) 891-3100; website: www.crkt.com



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method of locking the barrel to the slide. It was invented and patented by Frank Pachmayr in his "Signature" conversion of the 1911. When PC founding pistolsmith Paul Liebenberg worked as a gunsmith for Pachmayr, he discovered the spherical bushing and began incorporating it on his "modular" custom 1911s. He apparently liked it so much he took the idea with him when he opened the PC in 1990.

Briley Mfg., the renowned custom shotgun and pistol specialists out of Texas, manufactures the spherical bushings for the PC. In fact, the PC regularly uses custom parts from leading gunsmiths like Bill Wilson and Wayne Novak. This is not an organization hampered by NIH syndrome.

The aluminum framed .45 CQB is the first full-size aluminum framed .45 ACP from S&W. I did not think that was particularly remarkable until I saw the extrusion from which the .45 CQB is cut. It is just barely large enough to obtain enough meat to machine a bigbore frame. It is a tribute to design engineer Dick Mochek and CNC engineer John Clark that they could slice a .45 frame from 9mm stock.

Performance is in the name, so it had damn sure better be in the gun. Indeed it is. Performance Center autopistols are phenomenally dependable, as evidenced by a proven track record in both competition and police-supervised testing and training.

Mississippi Highway Patrol Lt. Phillip Hemphill won the 2000 PPC Nationals, his sixth, shooting a PPC Champion, the most accurate pistol the PC makes. Bobby Reed, a colorful character from Hemphill's department and a noted author, has seen so many Smith autos on the Highway Patrol range that he has lost count. "Son, this'll feed rocks if you can get 'em in the magazine," drawls Reed.

Accuracy was impressive with handheld groups hovering at 1" at 50 feet. I did not Ransom Rest the .45 CQB, nor was I able to sandbag it the way I would prefer due to a tight deadline. However, there is no shortage of anecdotal evidence of the gun's superior accuracy, like Hemphill's trophy cabinet.

Fit, finish, features, craftsmanship, performance— everything checked out on the .45 CQB. Based on this pistol as well as the other custom guns I saw being handmade, the PC is to custom gunsmithing what the F16 is to private aviation. PC manager Tom Kelly summed it up best: "Our handguns are handcrafted to the highest standards. These are not some retro-fitted 1911, these guns are made from scratch."



Performance Center pistols and revolvers are available from leading Smith & Wesson authorized dealers nationwide. For more information, inquire at your favorite dealer or contact the PC directly at (800) 331-0852, ext. 2904 or visit S&W on-line at www.smith-

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GENERATIONS

Continued from page 60

market economy— and we all rightfully condemn Smith & Wesson for its Machiavellian decision. We damn Smith & Wesson as strongly as the next guy.

The question, then, is not whether the agreement is good or bad— we agree it's bad— the question is whether we should toss Ginger Demers out on her ear.

Ginger works in order entry at Smith & Wesson, a 14-year employee. Before working in order entry, she was a machinist on the factory floor. She's worked in inventory control, did a stint in record keeping and took a turn in customer service. Her dad also works at Smith & Wesson, and before that her great-grandfather. Her husband works in the plant, too.

**The litigation
forced the
company to
make a tough
financial decision.**

Throw in a few assorted aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws, and Ginger's family has a combined 238 years of service working at 2100 Roosevelt Ave. That's including her family members no longer working there, like the 40 years of her great-uncle Don Dion, a colorful plant superintendent who is still fondly remembered by old timers today. Don worked back when H.R. Hellstrom, one of S&W's most famous presidents, ran the show.

Nor does it count great-grandfather William Dion's tenure back in the old plant on Stockbridge Street, back around the turn of the century, back when the Triple Lock was the finest double-action revolver in existence, back before Smith & Wesson introduced the first magnum. Back when the Wesson family owned Smith & Wesson.

But now the employer who put Ginger's great-uncle through college because they recognized his management potential— he was a machine operator at the time— is faced with massive legal problems. The litigation forced the company to make a tough financial decision— "a survival decision," as one S&W worker called it— to stay in business.

The penalty for this decision, according to some, is to put the historic handgun maker out of business with a consumer boycott. "I won't be happy until I see them bankrupt and out of business," reader Dave Licht fumes.

Ginger understands such sentiment.

"I'm a handgun owner too, so I have a split reaction to the agreement. As a handgun owner, it's not the most desirable outcome we could have had. But as a Smith & Wesson employee, I understand the reasons for it," she said matter-of-factly.

Ginger was not consulted on the decision before S&W president Ed Shultz signed the agreement.

Ginger is the fourth generation of her family to work at Smith & Wesson. Her cousin recently began working in the factory store, making it five generations of Dions and Robinsons to have seen the ups and downs of the handgun business.

But Licht would have Ginger standing in an unemployment line because of a corporate decision made by a foreign owner. Tomkins plc, the owner of S&W, is a \$5 billion company with literally dozens of holdings in the U.S. and the prospect of a tobacco-size settlement coming out of the 29 lawsuits was simply too dangerous to ignore.

To defend itself in the *Hamilton* case in New York, S&W paid its lawyers \$2.5 million, and it was exonerated, dropped from the suit, an outright victory. "If a win cost us two-point-five million, how much would a loss cost?" asked Herb Belin, S&W's director of new products. "Just to prepare for these suits costs about one million for each lawsuit. That's not even going to the discovery phase. The cost of defending 29 of these is just more than we could stand."

Ginger was not consulted on the decision before S&W president Ed Shultz signed the agreement. Nor was her dad, Tom Kuschka, who works in customer service. Tom had to field many of the angry, obscene phone calls that flooded the switchboard in the aftermath of the signing. "The first couple of weeks was horrendous," said the 31-year S&W veteran who once worked on the original Model 41. "You went home at night and..." Kuschka paused, his eyes clouding at the painful memory of too many hateful, spiteful words. "Well, it was pretty bad."

Tea bags poured into the mail room, symbolic tokens of anti-British sentiment drummed up by the NRA. Kuschka was called a turncoat, a Limey, an English-lover and several names that are too ugly to repeat. Kuschka, who worked on the first Model 59, was unprepared for the savagery of the attacks against Smith & Wesson. It pained him deeply to hear such mean-spirited, bitter recriminations from the very people that this affable tool

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and die maker considers his friends—Smith & Wesson customers.

"Everyone blames Tomkins, but Tomkins is probably the best thing that has happened to us since the Wessons owned us. The other owners, they just took from us. They sold our subsidiaries and milked us for all we were worth. One of them even took the pictures off the wall when they sold us.

"But Tomkins bought new machinery and modernized the plant. They weren't looking to squeeze us for every buck they could. They put back into Smith & Wesson. We're making the very best guns that we've ever made because of Tomkins. People forget that," Kuschka said.

"I don't blame people for the way they feel, but I do blame them for attacking us, personally, as Smith & Wesson employees."

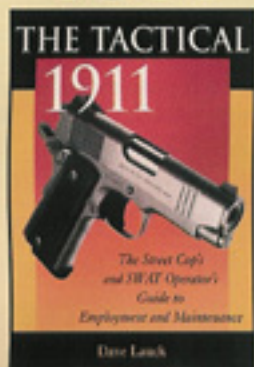
Indeed, Tomkins has spent some \$50 million on capital improvements at the factory, buying a fleet of sophisticated CNC machining centers, updating production methods, earning ISO 9000 quality certification, investing in S&W's future. It was Forstmann, Little & Co. that pinched the two original Frederic Remington paintings that hung on the walls of the rotunda. It was Lear Siegler Corp. that sold off the leather business, the longgun business and the ammo business to fatten their bottom line. It was Bangor Punta that sold off the South American division that eventually became Taurus. Not one of these owners came close to matching the commitment and investment that Tompkins has put into Smith & Wesson.

"I don't blame people for the way they feel, but I do blame them for attacking us, personally, as Smith & Wesson employees. There's a lot of loyalty here, a lot of commitment, a lot of history," said Ginger.

There are 700 other Gingers at 2100 Roosevelt Ave., and not a single one of them was consulted before an executive decision was made to extricate the company from government-funded extortion. Ginger and each of her 700 coworkers did, however, have a vote on the four occasions when several big trade unions tried to organize the factory. They voted no. "We've been non-union forever. They take care of us at Smith & Wesson, and they've taken care of my family for a long, long time," Ginger said. "This company has been here a very long time. And so have we."



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TRIAL BY FIRE

Continued from page 43

step to one side for a clearer shot if he wished to take the time.

The late Col. Rex Applegate repeatedly stated that point shooting could deliver "head-hitting accuracy at 15 yards." Therefore, the fifth and final target was placed at 15 yards, with masking that represented hard cover and left only the head of an IDPA silhouette exposed.

Match Results

A total of 107 contestants shot the event. Because five turns were involved to engage the targets, 18 shooters succumbed to the instinct to shoot the next target visually in line and suffered a three-second procedural penalty. These were removed from computation when figuring comparative speeds. There was no reason to remove their scores when computing for accuracy, however. This left us with 107 scores to study for accuracy, and 89 to study for speed.

The 15-yard headshot proved disastrously difficult. Only one shooter managed to make both headshots with both guns.

The results are shown in the accompanying chart. Of the remaining 89 "clean" scores, 29 (32.58 percent) showed slower speed but greater accuracy when using the sights. The next largest group, 24 shooters (26.97 percent), experienced slower speed and lower accuracy with the sighted pistol. The third largest grouping, 15 shooters (16.85 percent) experienced greater speed but worse accuracy when aiming with the sights.

The 15-yard headshot proved disastrously difficult. Rather than averaging, it was easier and more illustrative to tally up the number of hits and misses. Only one shooter—Walter Carlson of Concord, N.H., who competes with a revolver—managed to make both headshots with both guns.

Seven shooters made both headshots with the sighted Glock. Seven did so with the unsighted gun. Only 35 made one headshot with the sights, and 35 managed one headshot without sights. A staggering 65 missed both headshots using the sights, and 65 missed both using the sightless gun.

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certainly, a statistical anomaly. The odds of such a test coming out exactly equal should have been astronomical, but the scorecards do not lie.

Shooters were observed and surveyed as to the technique they used with the gun that had no sights. Of the 98 surveys returned, slightly over 100 technique explanations were recorded, since some shooters combined techniques. Of those, 63 percent looked over the top of the pistol. In one way or another, they had used the top plane of the pistol's slide to index visually with the target.

The top shooters with the unsighted gun were looking over the top of the slide.

Of those, 14 percent used the silhouette of the gun from the rear, visually superimposed over the target. This technique was developed and popularized by Jim Cirillo, who calls it an "alternative sight picture" rather than "point shooting."

Of those, 13 percent used a "point shoulder" posture. Roughly 11 percent trusted long-term muscle memory with their usual shooting stance, often combining that technique with either looking over the top of the slide or silhouetting the pistol on target. One percent used the Applegate Technique.

One shooter stated that he angled the pistol 45°, and used the upper right edge of the slide as a crude front sight. Though it has not yet been broken down numerically, it is clear from a comparison of surveys and score sheets that the top shooters with the unsighted gun were looking over the top of the slide. The Glock pistol lends itself admirably to this technique, as the squarish top of the slide gives a visual effect similar to aiming down the ventilated rib of a shotgun barrel.

Glock Familiarity

Was familiarity with the gun in question a major factor? The shooters familiar enough with the Glock pistol to use one by choice for the other seven events were broken out of the group and analyzed. There were 28 of them. Comparisons were made on two counts: number of points down from a perfect score and final Vickers Count score. Vickers Count is the total time for the event, plus half a second penalty for every point down. Thus, the lower the average score number, the better the performance, and the higher the points down number, the poorer the performance.

The 28 Glock shooters, all competing in Stock Service Pistol class, averaged scores of 35.35 with an average of 26.96 points down, counting both the sighted and the unsighted Glock 17s. The whole of the SSP

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class, including these Glock shooters, averaged a 38.59 score and 31.48 points lost. Thus, it is apparent that while the shooters who were accustomed to shooting Glocks did distinctly better than all other groups, this was not a huge factor of advantage.

Most observers had expected that the results would show slightly slower time, and distinctly more accurate shooting when the sights were used. This paradigm turned out to fit only about a third of the shooters. Almost 20 percent were faster and more accurate using the sights. This may have been due to experience and confidence in sighted fire.

This experiment showed that claims of "head-hitting accuracy" at 15 yards with or without sights is overly optimistic, to say the least.

A significant number of the shooters did better with the unsighted pistol.

The late Bill Jordan, not only a strong point shooting advocate but a superb practitioner of that skill, wrote in his book *No Second Place Winner* that by the time a distance of 15 yards is reached, the shooter should be taking a precisely aimed sight picture. He also, of course, advocated intimate familiarity with one's sidearm. This test validates Jordan's advice on both counts.

Depending on your definition of "point shooting," this may not have been a test of pointed versus aimed fire at all. It's a question of semantics. Many would define "point shooting" as any technique that uses a body position index to align the gun with the target, a technique in which the gun cannot be actually seen to be indexed with that which is to be shot.

Conventional wisdom may be in need of review in some elements of this controversy. The conventional wisdom said everyone should be faster but less accurate when they weren't using sights. In fact, while this was the single most common result, a very significant number of the shooters did better with the unsighted pistol.

This test clearly shows that within five yards, if the gun is at eye level and can crudely be seen to be superimposed on the target, it can hit as well if not better than a pistol aligned with a conventional "sight picture."



Suggestions and input are welcome and can be directed to Point Shooting Study, Lethal Force Institute, P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH 03302. All involved wish to thank the IDPA section of Pioneer Sportsmen, Glock, Pro-Load and PACT.

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GUNRIGHTS

Continued from page 36

Another way in which rights are limited is to "interpret" them in light of the purpose they are supposed to achieve. For example, those who oppose the private ownership of arms sometimes do this: They will assert that the purpose of the Second Amendment is related to the maintenance of militias. Since militias no longer exist and are a discredited and ineffectual means of securing the common defense in the modern world, the Second Amendment has been rendered obsolete, and may therefore be ignored.

Is this a legitimate way of imposing a limitation on the scope of a right, of rendering it less than absolute?

The example I just cited provides an answer. While the "interpretation" adopted above is a misreading of both the words and history of the Second Amendment, the effect of interpreting a right by reference to its purpose is nonetheless revealed: it, too, leads to the complete destruction of the right!

Privacy Example

An example involving a right that the Supreme Court actually pretends to recognize from time to time will perhaps be more convincing. The Supreme Court has discovered that the purpose of the Fourth Amendment is to protect people's "reasonable expectations of privacy," and so this has become the Court's standard for determining how far law enforcement can go in conducting searches and seizures.

Now, because people's expectations of privacy vary in different circumstances, the Court has concluded that our Fourth Amendment rights similarly vary.

So, the law of the land now proclaims that your rights against search and seizure are stronger in your home than when you are in your car. They are better yet if you own rather than rent. They are stronger still if you build a solid privacy fence around your yard than if you put up a chain link fence.

But you have virtually no rights if surveyed from above; since anyone can see what you're doing from up there, you cannot possibly have a reasonable expectation of privacy from snooping helicopters.

Your rights are stronger if you are a passenger in a car than if you are the driver. Personal papers are more protected than business records. You essentially have no rights in the records of your phone calls or banking transactions. A different Fourth Amendment rule for every occasion!

So the remarkable upshot of the Court's interpretation of the Fourth Amendment in light of its purpose is: never before in history has our government had so much power to search and seize your person, personal information

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and property without probable cause
and without a warrant, and yet never
before in history has the purpose of the
Fourth Amendment been so perfectly
and fully achieved!

The Important Point

It is important to realize that the
destruction of a right by "interpreting" it
in accordance with the purpose it is
meant to secure does not occur merely
because the interpreter picks the "wrong"
purpose. It is a necessary consequence of
the very process. Why?

To "interpret" a right in light of its
purpose is to render the right a means to
an end. This act immediately devalues
and dethrones the right. In a relationship
between means and end, the end, or goal,
is always superior to the means. The
means is only a way to achieve the goal.


**A right
must be
absolute.**

Primacy is accorded to the goal. If the
means does not quite work, the means
must be altered, if not actually abandoned,
to achieve the goal.

Consider, for example, the choice of a
particular bullet or the design of a partic-
ular load in order to achieve ideal ballis-
tics for an upcoming elk or prairie dog
hunt. A specific bullet or load has no
inherent worth; it is only relevant in
obtaining the ideal ballistic performance
you are seeking.

If a particular bullet doesn't perform
well, if the particular load you have
chosen doesn't quite do the job, you
reject it, or you change it. The end con-
trols the means.

By creating a relationship of means and
end between a right and its purpose, we
create a feedback loop in which the means
is constantly re-evaluated and adjusted in
light of the degree to which it is in fact
achieving the purpose. This process has no
logical stopping point and can also lead to
the complete redefinition of the original
chosen means (i.e., the complete eviscera-
tion of the right). The Court's Fourth
Amendment jurisprudence provides ample
evidence and proof of this.

A right, then, to be a right, must be
absolute, that is, subject to no exceptions,
and must be held or respected as an end in
itself, not as a means to some other end.
Otherwise, it does not stand outside and
above the law, but becomes subject to it, a
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If the right is not absolute, you  absolutely have no right.

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Continued from page 47

Protection loads hit center and 4" to 5" low. Groups with the ACP loads were at least the equivalent of those produced from my Gold Cup.

Neither of my Colts shoot particularly well with generic ball ammunition, but the Ruger consistently recorded five shot clusters of under 2" with the Blazers. My smallest group so far is a 0.88" five shot string using the Blazer ball.

Velocity Question

Reloading manuals usually show velocities in .45 Auto Rim revolvers to be significantly lower than ACP loads fired in autopistols with the same nominal barrel lengths. I expected to see the same tendency with the somewhat shorter Ruger.

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Nevertheless, in all but one instance, my chronograph revealed a slight velocity advantage for the revolver. The soft-spring load clocked 778 fps from the revolver— 42 fps faster than recorded from my Series 80 Enhanced.

The CCI ball clocked 915 fps, a 20 fps advantage over the Colt autoloader. The Personal Protection load left the Ruger at an average speed of 1,068 fps. The same load (from a different production lot) had clocked 1,084 fps from my Series 80 Cup.

Cases headspace at the point of diameter reduction in the cylinder and any build up of residue from powder or bullet lube makes chambering rounds difficult or impossible. Likewise, any departure from standard loading procedures can produce loading difficulties.

A number of loading manuals list loads with recommended OAL that places a portion of the full diameter of the bullet in front of the case. A favored load with the Hornady 200 gr. swaged lead WC chambers fine in my Series 80, but will not fully seat in the Ruger cylinder.

.45 Colt And Beyond

Consistent with the times, PMC is producing a traditional .45 Colt loading using a bare lead 250 gr. RN rated at 800 fps. The load obtains 768 fps from my abbreviated Ruger with three five-shot groups averaging 2.2" and impacting 2"

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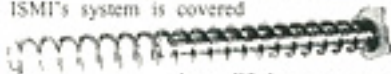
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to 3" above the aiming point.

My sight-in load, the heavy 2400 number, averaged 1,042 fps with an extreme spread of only 42 fps. This load, quite controllable in the lightweight Convertible, produced very consistent groups that averaged out at 1.75".

I approached the final load with a generous dollop of reverential trepidation. Cor-Bon has a couple of hunting loads which they deem ".45 Colt Magnums" and I laid hold of a 20 round box of the 300 gr. soft points.

Cor-Bon rates this load at 1,300 fps from a 7.5" barrel, but I think they were using an unvented T/C Contender pressure barrel to test the load. Cor-Bon warns that these loads are not intended for traditional Colt SAAs or their clones. New Model Blackhawks are on the approved list.

I knew that if these rounds even approached 1,300 fps from my 38 oz. Ruger that I was in what George Four Names calls "deep do-do." To my relief, the load averaged 1,106 fps from the ejector rod length barrel and was notably less ostentatious in the recoil department than my accustomed 300 gr. .44 Magnum loads.

Ejection was free and easy and the appearance of the dented primers was unremarkable. Two five-round groups averaged 2.36" and impacted 5" above point-of-aim. One full clockwise rotation of the elevation screw brought them on target.

Prior to firing these massive-looking loads, I entertained mental images of detached ejector rod housings and inertia launched base pins not to mention reorganized digital geometry and pain—lots of pain. The lightweight ejector assembly remained tightly attached to the barrel. The base pin, which seems to be more closely fitted than on earlier examples, showed no tendency to walk forward under recoil. My hand remained comfortably attached and functional.

Overall Perspective

Long regarded as the no-frills member of the New Model single-action family, the current issue basic Blackhawk displays the same excellent fit and finish characteristic of the entire line. The alloy grip frame and ejector rod housing are desirable features on the shorter models that are particularly suitable for unobtrusive portability.

In terms of intrinsic accuracy and field utility, this .45 Convertible gives up relatively little to the longer magnum chambered New Models, considering the savings in weight and overall length. All .45 ACP loads are extremely pleasant to shoot as are the traditionally loaded .45 Colts. As an accessory for the growing tribe of the .45, the Convertible Blackhawk has much to recommend it.



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Actions by T	109	Coronado Leather	90	KleenBore	73	Rock River Arms	102
Alpha Precision	109	Craig Custom	12	KnifeArt.com	100	Mitch Rosen	72
American Sales & Mfg.	101	Crimson Trace	95	Kramer Handgun Leather	75	Safariland Concealment	14
Arizona Custom Knives	96	Custom Arms	109	Krieger Gunsmith	90	Safariland Holsters	102
Arntzen Corp.	82	Cylinder & Slide Shop	33	Kustom Ballistics	109	Safe & Knife Company	87
Ashley Outdoors	79	Dawson Precision	79, 90, 96	Las Vegas Classic Knife	88	Saf-T-Hammer	104
Les Baer Custom	C3	DC Custom	109	LaserMax	73	Wil Scheumann Co.	101
Bagmaster	83	Defense Security Products	37	Law Concealment	100	Shooters.com	90
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Blackhawk Industries	7	Elishewitz	79	Masters of Defense	9	Smith & Wesson	6
Blade-Tech Industries	83	Emerson Knives	27	Chip McCormick	21	Southern Belle Brass	82
Bo-Mar Combat Sights	82	Evolution Gun Works	37	Merit Corp.	84	Milt Sparks Leather	76
Brian Tighe Knives	74	Falcon Machining LTD	76	Mossberg Safes	99, 101, 103	Springfield	C2
Briley Mfg.	104	Fobus USA	97	MTM Molded	77	Spyderco	78
Broken Gun Ranch	109	Fort Knox Security	76	Nowlin Custom Mfg.	84	SSK Industries	103
Ed Brown Products	92	Franklin Mint	11	Options for Personal Security	82	Starline	87
Brownells	86	Gilmore Sports Concepts	39	Oregon Trail Bullet	29	STI International	8
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Carter Custom	80	GT Target Sports	82	Outdoor Channel	15	Ten Ring Precision	109
Caspian Arms LTD	103	Heinie Specialty Products	88	Pachmayr	95	Thunder Ranch	81
Casull Arms Corp.	97	Hogue Grips	93	Pact Inc.	5	Truckvault	41
Chapman Academy	86	Integrated Systems Mgmt.	105	Paladin Press	36	Universal Shooting Academy	101
J.A. Ciener	6	International Police Equipment	74	Pearce Grip	31	Waller & Sons	86
Columbia River Knife & Tool	77, 78	Jarvis Gunsmithing	82	Phoenix USA	85	Walther USA	91
						WC Wolff Co.	81
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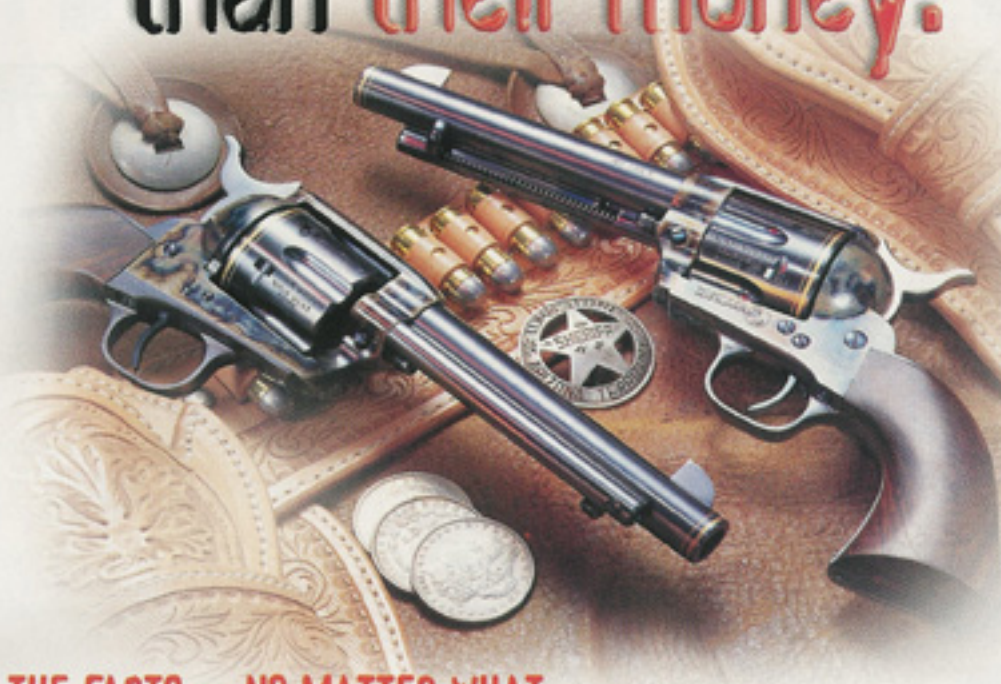
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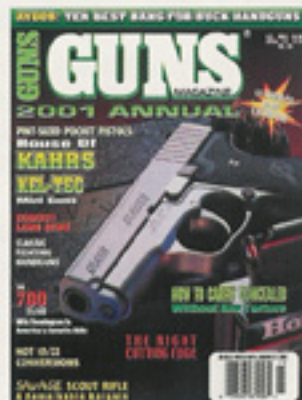
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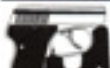
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2.4

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since its inception— that
translates into 536,000
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Continued from page 114

INFORMATIONAL ETHICS

Can you, the reader of a newsstand magazine, be trusted to know sensitive information pertaining to weapons? Is it appropriate to disseminate information to the general public on topics such as the reason behind a double-tap, what the Hatcher formula means, why we practice the Mozambique Drill, how a SWAT team utilizes an entry gun in CQB environments?

We have always said yes, it is appropriate to inform our readership on the judicious use of lethal force because the handgun is a firearm, a weapon. From Durwood Eggs' flintlock duelling pistols to Gaston Glock's eponymous polymer sidearm, pistols have always been primarily designed as weapons.

No one has ever questioned the appropriateness of such information in *American Handgunner*, not until very recently.

in the blade arts for many years, mostly Pentjak Silat. But I am always a bit concerned when an article gets too specific about lethal edged weapon techniques, such as take-downs. Someone needs to learn things like this from an instructor. Not everyone who reads a gun and knife magazine is a responsible person.”

We subscribe to the idea that information is neither good nor evil, it simply exists in a moral vacuum. Information may be undiscovered or previously known, but its essence remains unchanged. What you choose to do with information is what makes it either beneficial or harmful, fruitful or destructive, positive or negative.

We published an article about a knife that is specifically designed for CQB environments as a backup to a firearm. This is a fighting knife in every aspect of



I find it very interesting, even fascinating, to see how and why such criticism of our editorial content has come about.

It has nothing to do with guns. The concern is over knives. Recently, we began to incorporate a new focus in our editorial direction for *Handgunner*. We realized that many, if not most, of our handgunning acquaintances carry a pocket knife of the genre we call the “tactical folder,” a medium-size pocket knife, usually a liner lock, with a thumb stud or hole for one-handed opening and a pocket clip for easy accessibility.

With that in mind, we thought we would offer some knife coverage. “My god,” exclaimed one of our more significant advertisers. “I can’t believe you printed that photo. It clearly shows the right technique for cutting someone’s throat. People don’t need to know that. They damn sure don’t need to read about it in a magazine.”

Reader J. W. Bensinger of Westminster, W. Va., had a similar comment: “I enjoyed the article on the Hissatsu as I have trained

its shape, size and weight, which are based on a Japanese Samurai weapon with some 2,000 years of combat-proven effectiveness. That’s valid. That’s history. That’s information.

We included a photo of a clavicle insertion in which the blade, held in a reverse grip, is plunged behind the opponent’s collar bone, on the left side of the chest, and shoved down so that the blade ruptures the aortic knob. This is a part of the heart where the major vessels enter and exit and includes the vena cava and the aorta—puncture those hosepipes and you’ve got maybe 30 seconds before you bleed out internally.

Curiously, we have never received any sort of complaint about head shots or, as it is sometimes known, popping the melon. Whole articles have appeared on the subject of terminal ballistics—the effects of bullets in human flesh—without a squeak of protest. As one martial arts instructor put it, “How is it acceptable to write about high-velocity punctures but not low-velocity punctures?”

Our Definition Of Heaven: Free Beer After A Good Pistol Match

Beretta USA employee Ernest Langdon won the 2000 IDPA National Championship with a Beretta Model 92 Elite, firing not only the best score in Stock Service Pistol, but also the high overall tally. Perhaps we should clarify that and say that Langdon shot the *low* overall score, because IDPA scoring is based on time, and the fastest time wins.

The match consisted of 16 stages requiring a minimum of 209 rounds to complete. With a field of 331 shooters, they combined for over 71,000 rounds fired during the four-day event.

The match was not without its controversy, however. IDPA board member John Sayle was accused of physically accosting a Safety Officer after completing a stage in which Sayle says he was "rushed" by the SO to make ready. Sayle denies that he shook the official by the arm. A flurry of acerbic emails surfaced on the Web about this affair, but the best we can ascertain is that Sayle did not in fact touch the official, and that an apology was issued over any misunderstanding.

Nonetheless, the incident drew into sharp focus the fallibility of IDPA's "failure to do right" rule, an encompassing provision in the minimalist rulebook designed to cover everything from poor sportsmanship to outright cheating. Bill Wilson, founder and president of IDPA, admitted that a more detailed rulebook might be needed to address controversial calls by officials in the future.

On the up side, the IDPA Nationals pampered the shooters with hospitality rooms each evening with free drinks and munchies, a barbeque catered by Corkys of Memphis and lots of social activities. From the beginning, IDPA has focused on showing the shooters a good time at its matches, with industry sponsors picking up the tab.



PARTICIPANTS BY CLASS

Stock Service Pistol

Masters: 18
Experts: 33
Sharpshooters: 34
Marksmen: 21
Total: 106

Enhanced Service Pistol

Masters: 15
Experts: 19
Sharpshooters: 22
Marksmen: 23
Total: 79

Stock Service Revolver

Masters: 7
Experts: 3
Sharpshooters: 9
Marksmen: 10
Total: 29

Custom Defensive Pistol

Masters: 19
Experts: 27
Sharpshooters: 34
Marksmen: 25
Total: 105



Place	Shooter	Pistol	Time
Stock Service Pistol			
Champion	Ernest Langdon	Beretta 92 Elite	176.41
1st Master	David Sevigny	Glock 17	177.17
2nd Master	Tom Yost	S&W 5906	194.23
3rd Master	Richard Clary	CZ 75	195.87
Stock Service Revolver			
Champion	Alex Zimmerman	S&W 625	206.26
1st Master	Bill Rudder	S&W 625	210.99
2nd Master	James Stout	not reported	233.49
3rd Master	Morgan Dague	not reported	245.47
Enhanced Service Pistol			
Champion	D.R. Middlebrooks	EAA Witness	178.96
1st Master	Scott Warren	SA 1911 .40	182.66
2nd Master	Larry Vickers	Colt 1911 9mm	198.24
3rd Master	David Elderton	not reported	203.96
Custom Defensive Pistol			
Champion	Rob Leatham	SA 1911 .45	179.92
1st Master	John Shaw	Baer 1911 .45	186.79
2nd Master	Bill Wilson	Wilson 1911 .45	194.35
3rd Master	Greg Martin	Wilson 1911 .45	201.76
High LE	Scott Warren	SA 1911 .40	182.66
High Senior	John Sayle	Wilson 1911	215.98
High Gun Industry	Ernest Langdon	Beretta 92 Elite	176.41
High Gun Press	Bruce Gray	not reported	236.27
High Lady	Joyce Fowler	Wilson 1911	259.22
High International	Rajko Roseto	not reported	279.39

Industry Insider

by Cameron Hopkins

SIG Arms Sold To Private Investors

Two German textile magnates, Michael Luke and Thomas Ortmeier, have purchased SIG Arms from the SIG Group, a Swiss corporation whose primary business is manufacturing packaging materials. The sale price was not disclosed.

The deal includes the SIG Arms factory and distribution center in New Hampshire, Blaser rifles of Isny, Germany, the SIG Sauer facility in Eckenforde, Germany, and the SIG Arms factory in Neuhausen, Switzerland.

Not included in the sale are the SIG assault rifle factory in Neuhausen and the Hammerli factory in Lenzburg, both of which will remain under the control of the SIG Group.

VEKTOR CLOSES UP SHOP

South African handgun importer Vektor USA has closed up shop on the CP-1 pistol and if you attempt to contact the company, all you will get is a recorded message that says in part: "Due to circumstances beyond our control, Vektor is suspending sales and marketing of the CP-1 pistols... if you are calling about the safety warning on the CP-1, please call 011-27-12-620-2616." The phone number is a listing in South Africa.

We covered the Vektor a number of years ago when a reporter ran across a gun in Europe, long before it was imported to the U.S. At the time, we were generous in describing the gun as "reliability challenged." When the company began importing the pistol to the U.S., we passed on the opportunity to re-review it in *Handgunner*. As they might say in Africa, a leopard doesn't change its spots. We're sorry they're out of business, but with a gun that jammed as much as the CP-1 did, it's little wonder.



COLT RECALLS LIGHT RIFLE

Colt's Mfg. Co. had barely begun production of the Light Rifle that it acquired from **Ultra Light Arms** when a problem with the bolt assembly surfaced, resulting in the beleaguered gunmaker issuing a recall. A Colt spokesman said the problem was that the firing pin on some rifles may fail to cock, leaving itself at rest on the primer of a chambered round. The result could be an accidental discharge if the bolt was hit or the gun dropped.

Industry insiders said Colt had shipped fewer than 500 units of the Light Rifle. Our mole also reported that there are about 1,500 Light Rifles ready to ship from the manufacturer, **Saco Defense Systems**. However, the company refuses to release the guns until Colt pays its bills, according to an industry newsletter.

Additional trouble looms from Ultra Light Arms owner Melvin Forbes, who was forced to take back what was left of his company after Colt reportedly failed to pay him.

Australia Authorizes Army To Shoot Civilians

Having disarmed its citizens of lawfully owned firearms, the government of Australia has now passed the Defense Legislation Amendment Bill 2000 (Aid To Civilian Authorities) which gives the Australian army the authority to use "reasonable and necessary force" to suppress civilian unrest. The definition of "reasonable and necessary force," it goes without saying, is left up to the government.

The bill also grants the army authority to enter buildings without a warrant, cordon off areas, erect barricades and stop vehicles to search them without a warrant. The bill specifically authorizes the army to use lethal force against civilians when there are "reasonable grounds," a condition that



the government decides.

Prime Minister John Howard dismisses critics of the bill as over-reacting. He alleges that the purpose of the bill is to combat terrorism and that the "shoot to kill" authorization is not intended for use during peaceful civil demonstrations. Green Party and Democrat politicians are opposed to the new law.

It has now been three years since Australia outlawed semiauto shotguns and rifles. Since that time, over 650,000 firearms banned by the government have been rounded up and destroyed. But is Australia any safer? Homicides have increased 3.2 percent, assaults have jumped 8.6 percent and burglaries have skyrocketed 44 percent.

Continued on page 112

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2001



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There are lots of handguns on the market and several good reasons for owning them. There are highly tuned handguns built for the shooting sports and gun games. On a more serious level, there are specially built handguns for helping you protect the things most important to you. At Les Baer Custom, we understand the difference.

When you need a serious handgun for self defense, home protection or duty use, it's critical that you make the right choice.

Les Baer Custom makes serious guns. Skillful, accurate, reliable guns, all based on the time proven 1911 design. They work great, they shoot straight, and they're priced right. It's the perfect combination for people whose purposes go beyond playing games.

Clint Smith, Director of the world famous Thunder Ranch training facility, is a big believer in serious guns. That's why Clint Smith approached Les Baer Custom about developing a special gun for his students - a gun they might one day have to trust with their lives. The result was the THUNDER RANCH SPECIAL®, a dependable, no-nonsense, combat-proven 1911 with which Clint Smith and his students could feel completely confident.

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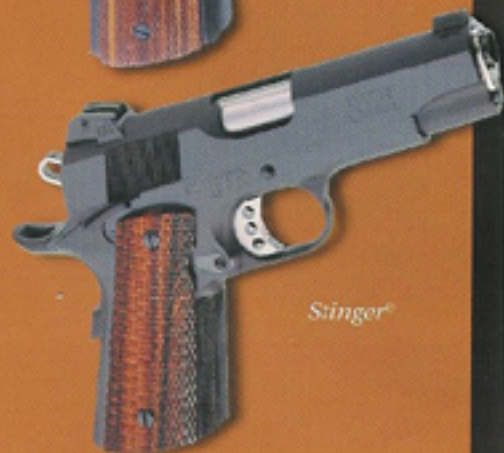
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at a savings of over \$500! Each CDP features a beveling treatment that rounds corners, Tritium

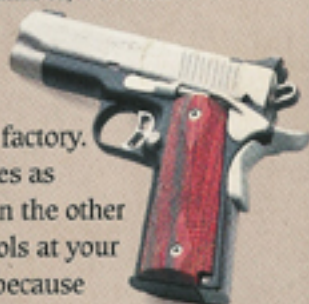
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Each pistol has a lightweight frame machined from solid bar stock of 7075-T7 aluminum, the hardest and strongest available. These frames have been tested to 20,000 rounds without measurable evidence of wear. Also standard are Kimber features like match grade barrel and chamber, beveled magazine well and high ride beavertail grip safety.

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