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MARCH/APRIL 2001

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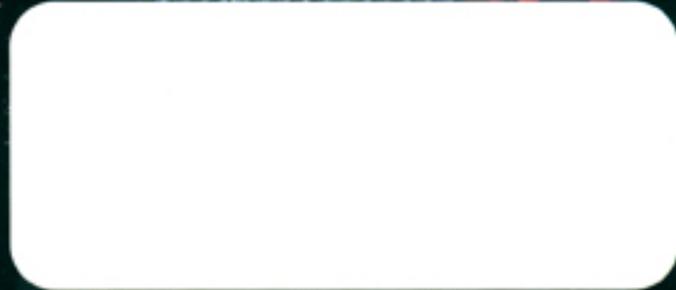
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**HOW TO SHOOT
LIKE AN EXPERT!**
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**HOW TO DEAL
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IPSC MATCH REPORT (p. 72)



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On The Cover:
Beretta Elite II 9mm pistol
Strider combat knife
Photo by Ichiro Nagata



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12 TIME 5.09
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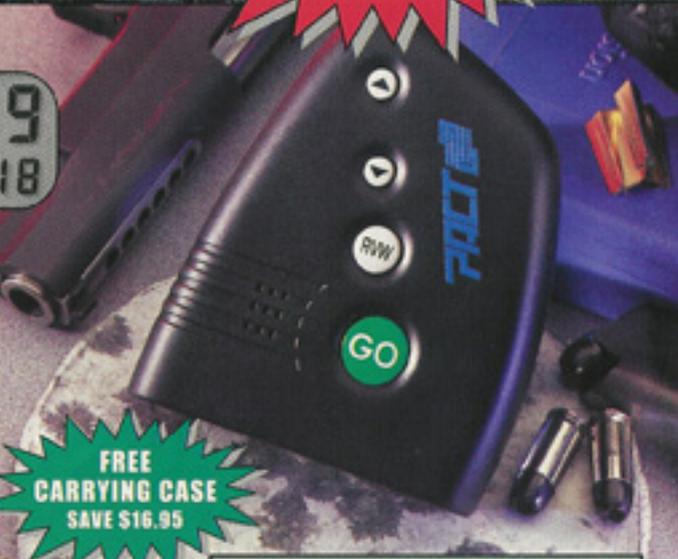
nears the end of the run. The time should be big and easy to read. The buttons should be designed to prevent an accidental reset. Since most clubs are on a pretty tight budget the cost must be kept down.

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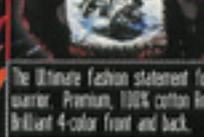
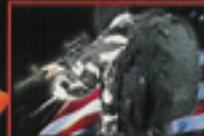
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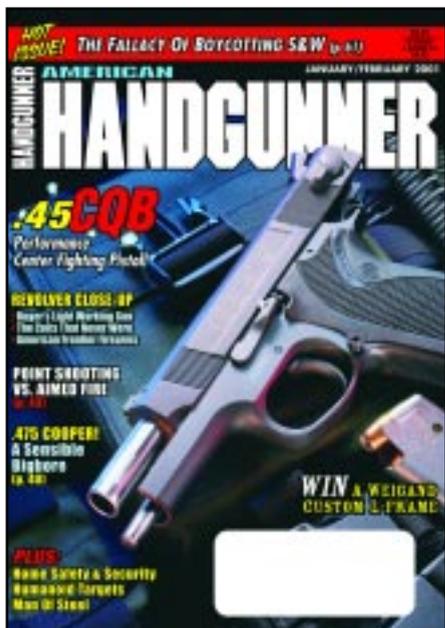
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The Emperor's Clothes

"The Modern Isosceles" (Nov/Dec '00) was superb. Ron Avery had the balls to write— and *American Handgunner* had 'em to publish— that the "emperor has no clothes on." Most of us armed civilians, who are less than SWAT-team experienced, shout a resounding "Hooray!"

Peter A. Poccia
New York, N.Y.

Oh Poor Us-ing

I'm writing in response to your sellout to Smith & Wesson (Jan/Feb '01). I'll be short and to the point; I can't stand going over this old story again. Now even your magazine goes Liberal Left! Simply— no amount of whining, crybabying or "Oh, poor us"-ing will ever convince me to ever buy any of their products directly. Never— ever!

John Yashinski
Red Lodge, Mont.

Heat Of Battle

Smith & Wesson did not "drop their weapon" during battle; they deserted the rest of the pro-Second Amendment community in the heat of battle. There is a difference. In times of war, deserters are usually shot. The reason for this is not retaliatory, but to prevent everyone else from turning tail and running.

I disagree with the assertion that if Smith & Wesson goes out of business, the only benefit will be to the enemy. Just the opposite is true. If Smith & Wesson goes out of business, the less likely it will be that other firearm manufacturers will make the same mistake.

Kevin B. Gibbs
Orange, Calif.

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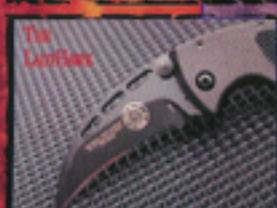
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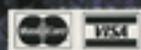
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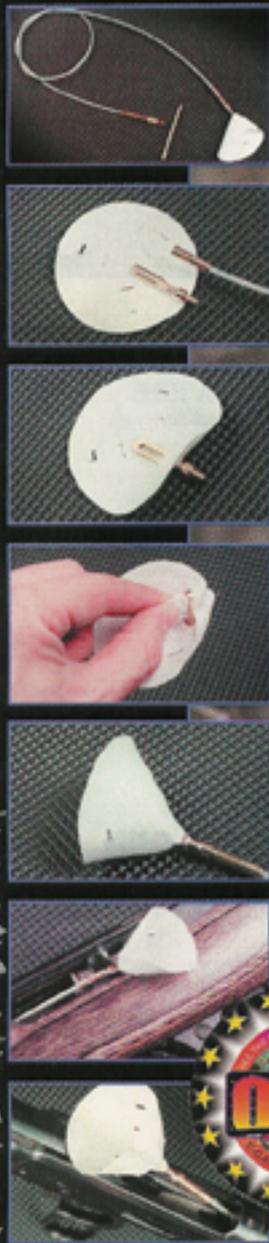
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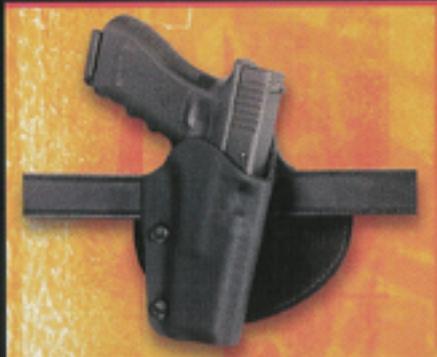
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SPEAKOUT

If S&W wanted to stand and fight, they could have increased prices on their guns to pay for the legal fees. I would be buying them now, even at a \$100 or higher markup, to support them.

As for Ginger and the crew at S&W... well, too bad. Collateral damage happens. People get injured when their company makes bad decisions. I sure as hell am not going to buy S&W.

Thad Baker
San Diego, Calif.

Live Long And Prosper

The vituperative reaction of many in the gun-owning community to the Smith & Wesson agreement always made me a bit uneasy; in some ways, their reaction bothered me more than the agreement itself.

So I was pleased to read the eye-opening article on page 61 of the Jan/Feb 2001 issue of *American Handgunner*. It should be printed in every gun publication!

I immediately called a friend who recently purchased a new Kimber, just to let him know where his fine pistol experienced its birthing pains.

Thank you for putting this controversy into its proper perspective. To paraphrase a popular science fiction TV show, may Smith & Wesson live long and prosper!

Art Sweisfurth
Morton, Penn.

When Rights Are Gone

It would be a shame if the S&W incident cost people their jobs, but, in the long run, the rights and freedoms of 260 million people are more important. People can always get another job, but once our rights are taken away, we will never get them back.

Roger L. Wagner
Erlanger, Ky.

A Paid Advertisement?

I guess this was inevitable. The article covering the Smith & Wesson Performance Center was quite possibly the most unprofessional bit of heartstring-tugging and guilt-placing I have ever witnessed. Do you really expect the readers of your magazine to buy into the "five generation" BS? How about the call for "forgiveness"? What a sham! Was this a paid advertisement from S&W? It certainly read as such.

Hank Mason
Taos, N.M.

Cool It

Reflecting upon the uproar about Smith & Wesson's surrender, I would like to share my thoughts on the subject. Instead of condemning S&W, we should direct our anger at the real culprits of this deplorable act—and we all know who they are!

Today Smith & Wesson, tomorrow another scheme and another gunmaker. They must be really enjoying the discord

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they managed to sow in our ranks. As of now, they lay low, waiting for us to finish the job they have started. Then they will set their sights on the next target!

I think we should rally around Smith & Wesson, give them our support, for if they go down it will only pave the way to further disasters. It seems to me that boycotting them is comparable to kicking one's favorite featherweight for getting defeated in an uneven fight with the heavyweight champion.

Besides, if handgun makers would—God forbid—start to disappear from the scene, S&W ought to be the last, not the first, one to go. They have the greatest selection of handguns, and each one of us would be able to find something for ourselves that we could live with. Just look at their catalog and compare it with the others.

Adding to this is their constantly improving quality, excellent customer service and long history; I consider them the biggest icon in the field.

So my suggestion is: Just cool off, join the NRA and get yourself that Smith & Wesson you were thinking about— we'll all be better off this way!

Stan Grochowski
Phoenix, Ariz.

UPS Inaccuracies

In the Nov/Dec 2000 issue, Donald L. Cline's letter, "The 'Rights' of UPS," takes issue with a letter I sent in that was published in the Sept/Oct 2000 issue ("Red Neck Extremists"). I would like to take this opportunity to respond to his inaccuracies.

Mr. Cline is wrong when he states that the United Parcel Service was "a government-created entity." It seems he has confused UPS with the United States Postal Service (USPS). To say that UPS is a government entity is as absurd as claiming that McDonalds is a government-created corporation with "limited liability."

When I stated that UPS could conduct their business in any way it wished, I was assuming that the reader could exercise common sense. It is assumed that in conducting its business, UPS would conform to the laws regulating its business. I will concede to Mr. Cline that if UPS violates the law, the government will (and should) jump "down UPS's throat."

Finally, Mr. Cline states that we can only take our business elsewhere "until there isn't any place left to take it." Again, this is wrong. If there is no business providing a needed service, start your own! Do not depend on others to do it for you. If there are enough people desirous of a service, you should be able to gather enough capital to start your own business. We live in a free society (albeit

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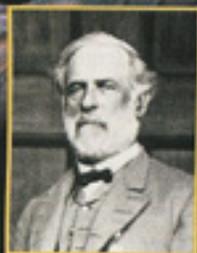


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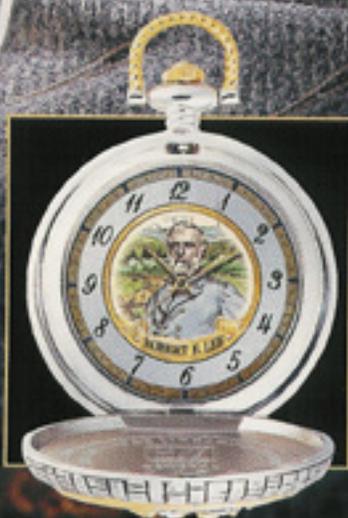
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less and less under the current Clinton/Gore regime), and we do not need the government to create a new "corporation" to meet our needs— we can do it ourselves.

I am sorry, Mr. Cline, but UPS is a private corporation, UPS may run its business as it sees fit (OK, within the limits of the law), and your recourse is to not use their services.

So I say again, the best way to get our message across is to write to UPS and tell them that you will not use their services until they reverse their decision, and then stick to your word. The loss of revenue is the best way to get any corporation's attention.

Gerald Valusek
 El Centro, Calif.

Half-A-Thou

"Size Doesn't Matter" (Nov/Dec '00), but arithmetic fundamentals do. Charles Petty says the actual caliber measured length of a Kimber Ultra Carry barrel is 3.1595". This dimension is commonly rounded off in descriptive terms at 3.16". The differential is not .010", as he states. Rather, the spread is a mere .0005", or what a machinist would refer to as half-a-thou.

Daniel McNamara
 West Hills, Calif.

Absolute Rights

I read Jeff Snyder's column in the Jan/Feb 2001 issue and feel he is incorrect in his assertion that "a right must be absolute," regarding the Second Amendment. Would that it were so!

The right to vote is guaranteed by the first two articles of the Constitution, and later amended by the 12th, 15th, 19th, 24th and 26th Amendments. Yet, in Pennsylvania, if I show up to vote without having registered 30 days prior, I wouldn't be voting. The right is regulated.

The right to free speech is guaranteed by the First Amendment, but I can't with impunity libel someone, verbally incite a riot or falsely cry "fire" in a crowded theater. The right is interpreted and, thus, to some degree, regulated. As imperfect as our legal system is, it helps to keep us from anarchy and totalitarian rule.

Mr. Snyder is preaching to a choir that would love to believe in absolute rights, but our constitutional and legal system functions, in part, to interpret rights, not to just sit back and assume all rights are absolute and everyone agrees with them.

But the lay press, quoting Mr. Snyder's column, could easily support the position that he— and we— feel that violent convicted felons should be allowed to have oodles of legal firearms, just as any law-abiding citizen, in the

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SPEAKOUT

blind pursuit of absolute rights. This could marginalize any credibility we may have in public education.

Richard T. Goldhahn Jr.
Churchville, Penn.

Rambling Journey

In Jeff Snyder's article in the Jan/Feb 2001 issue, "Can A 'Right' Be Moderated In The Interest Of Public Safety?," we are taken on a rambling journey that ends with a paragraph that says, essentially: "A right... to be a right, must be absolute... subject to no exceptions... If the right is not absolute, you... have no right."

Huh?

Certainly, life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are the most basic of rights, and yet we take these away from felons all the time, and for good cause!

Mr. Snyder's pronouncements in defense of Second Amendment rights are based on nonsense! To use his logic will do nothing but lose this argument for us all.

Noel Funchess
Cleveland, Miss.

Fuzzy Eyes

As most shooters learn, or are forced to learn, middle age usually imposes a fuzziness on the previous clarity of your

sight picture. I took to heart Dave Anderson's comments (Sept/Oct '00) on the red dot diode sights such as Tasco's Optima 2000.

Dave was quite accurate, and now I, too, am again accurate in my shooting, using the Optima 2000 red dot sight. I had only one bump, which the good folks at Tasco quickly remedied to my full satisfaction.

The Optima 2000 weighs only a few ounces, is easily adjustable and quickly zeroes in. Kudos to *American Handgunner* and Tasco for putting another pair of middle-aged eyes back on target!

John Hauelsen
Worthington, Ohio

Objectionable Photos

I feel compelled to bring to your attention the Hissatsu article and your ensuing defense of the same in the Jan/Feb 2001 edition.

In my opinion, the only objectionable portion of the article is the illustrations. I found the photos so disturbing that I threw that issue in the trash rather than forwarding it to my friend in New Zealand as I usually do.

What I found most disturbing about the photo layout is the subtext of the "attack from the rear" sequence carried out against a civilian in suburban America by an "operative" dressed in the latest Reno/Freeh fashions. Political orientation aside, attacking someone from behind

with lethal intent is still viewed as murder in many jurisdictions.

Also, while knives and guns are inanimate objects, information is produced and used only by man, and no man, including you, lives in a "moral vacuum"; so to say that information exists alone and separate from humanity is a fallacy— it is pure Barbra Streisand, embraced by the likes of Stalin and Klinton/Gore.

Additionally, I urge you to consider that the photography in question is describing not only technique but *behavior* as well, and behavior has moral, ethical and legal ramifications.

In fact, nothing you cited in your rebuttal even addresses the obvious moral implications of endorsing an attack from the rear with a knife that is supposed to be a "backup" weapon; indeed, nothing you cite makes any sense at all.

Ken Kanowsky
kenk@gorge.net

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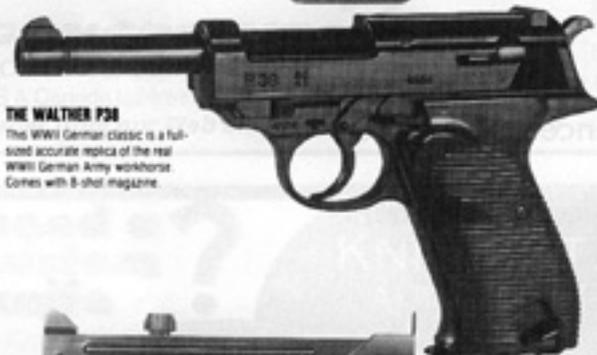
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The Three-Seven-Five: Greatest Game Getter Of All Time

Holland & Holland's .375 Magnum is generally considered the most versatile big-game rifle cartridge in existence. It's quite true that others shoot flatter at long range, some drill bigger holes, some smaller, and there are cartridges that throw heavier or lighter bullets. However, when it comes time to get the job done on animals large or small, at short or long range, the legendary .375 H&H is likely the best caliber to get the job done effectively.

In handguns, the .375 JDJ fits into the same category. It has effectively taken just about every major game animal in the world and continues to do so with a

270 gr. Hornady bullet at 2,100 fps.

The .375 H&H has been chambered in a few XP-100 conversions and is also quite effective in handgun form, although the recoil is somewhat disconcerting. The .375 Win. has been a dud from the concept. The first ammunition usually ripped the end of the case off and deposited it in the bore. Succeeding shots ironed them into the bore.

Ballistics of the .375 Win. were terrible. The last 250 gr. ammo I chronographed developed less velocity than 240 gr. .44 Magnum ammo from the same manufacturer in the same barrel length. Scratch that wimp, except for good handloads and deer-size animals at short ranges.

A NEW .375 FOR HANDGUNNERS

Shortly after the introduction of the Encore, I developed the .375-'06 JDJ with a .30-'06 case maximized for case capacity and utilizing a 60 degree shoulder. It does 2,400 to 2,450 fps from a 15" barrel with the 270 gr. Hornady. Pretty potent. Some of the factory .375 H&H ammo does near that from rifle-length barrels. Now, however, a rimless factory round is available to provide this excellent performance from factory-loaded ammunition in the Encore.

It's called the .376 Steyr and it's loaded by Hornady. A 225 gr. load at 2,560 fps and a 270 at almost 2,400 fps from a 15" barrel provide enough raw power to effectively take anything on earth. Accuracy is excellent. Trajectory is about the same as a .308 from the same barrel length.

Provided with an Arrestor muzzle brake, a scope and T/C's Rynite or rubber grips, any experienced bigbore shooter should be able to easily handle it. No FMJ ammunition other than handloads are currently produced. The cartridge was developed by Steyr for their rifles, and it gains friends daily.

The .375 JDJ, which trundles along at 2,100 fps with the 270 gr. Hornady from a 14" Contender, has literally become the

number-one choice of worldwide big-game hunters for the last 20 years, even though handicapped by the lack of factory ammo. Adding 300 fps to the velocity, like the .376 Steyr does, requires a stronger gun than the Contender, and also adds additional range to the rig.

Lighter weight bullets—particularly the Hornady 220 gr. flat point—are terrific deer bullets, giving excellent performance. Hornady's new 225 gr. spire point is as yet untried on game from these calibers at pistol velocities.

In power, the .375s in pistols rank as follows, from weakest to

strongest: .375 Win., .375 JDJ, .375-284, .376 Steyr, .375-'06 JDJ and .375 H&H. This ranking is based on handloads; factory ammo varies a lot in velocity.

The only modern .375 cartridge to be chambered in a revolver was the .375 Super Mag in the Dan Wesson. I wonder what would have happened if the .357 Magnum had been a .375 instead?



Come With Us Now As We Take An Incredible Journey Into The Inner Depths Of A Reloading Die

Most of the time you really don't need to worry about what's happening inside a loading die. If you've adjusted it properly, you just ram the case in there and it comes out right. Amazing.

We get a lot of questions about how long reloaded brass should last. There is no answer because every gun, every die and even each individual piece of brass presents a set of variables over which we have no control.

We can say this, however, with certainty—brass life is directly related to the intensity of the load. Cases subjected to maximum loads—regardless of the cartridge—are not going to last nearly as long as brass fired with middle-of-the-road charges. That's a fact.

Another big factor is how much we work the brass. Repeated expansion and sizing work-hardens the case and over time makes it less resilient. An understanding of what's happening in the die helps a little.

When you touch off a round, the case is subjected to pressure from the burning powder. It must expand—quickly—to seal the chamber and prevent gas from escaping where it isn't supposed to. And here is the first major variable—no two chambers are exactly alike. We have to *resize* the case to a diameter that will allow it to back into any chamber.

If we use the .38 Special as an example, the minimum



chamber has a diameter of 0.3809". So, in order to just get the case back in a minimum chamber, the brass has to be something less than that. In fact, due to the springy nature of brass, the sizing die has to be 0.004" to 0.005" smaller to be sure that *any* cartridge will fit *any* chamber.

This subjects that poor little piece of brass to quite a bit of squeezing and expanding during a reloading cycle.

Carbide Fever

One of the greatest boons to the reloader was the development of carbide sizing dies. Most shooters take them for granted these days and probably wouldn't dream of buying conventional steel sizing dies for straight-wall handgun cases, but there was a time when carbide dies were both rare and terribly expensive.

The first one I ever saw was on a Star Loader, which was the tool that kept me in .38 and .45 ammo during my long career in bullseye shooting. The Star dies were a smaller diameter and could not be used in standard presses that accept 7/8x14 dies. A few custom makers offered those in a very limited way in the '50s, but it wasn't until the early '60s that the big names—Pacific, C-H, RCBS, Lyman—offered carbide sizing dies widely.

A single carbide sizing die sold for around \$25. A complete three-die set with a steel sizing die was \$12. Those were '60s dollars, and it's interesting to



see how today's prices are about the same, even though the dollar is not worth nearly as much.

Most people don't notice that there is only a small ring of carbide material which is pressed into the die body that is little more than a holder for the carbide ring and decapping pin. All the sizing is done by the carbide ring that is only about a quarter of an inch deep. Until you see a cutaway, some of this is not obvious.

The extreme hardness that makes carbide work so well for sizing can also be a trap for the unwary. It is brittle, and if you slam a shell holder into the insert, there is a chance that it will shatter. Proper adjustment is to leave just a little daylight between the die and the shell holder when it is in its highest position.

EVERYONE LIKES A LITTLE SQUIRT

For quite a while, carbide dies were limited to cases with straight walls, but we have them now for some cases with gentle tapers such as the 9mm Luger or .30 Carbine. There are even a few for rifle cases. One of the great selling points of carbide dies is that you don't have to lubricate the case. That is surely so for most applications, but sometimes it helps to give just a small squirt of a liquid case lube, such as RCBS Case Slick. It reduces the effort required and actually speeds up loading a bit. If I get lazy and don't clean the cases between loadings, a squirt of lube is a great idea.



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The Crimson Tide

Crimson Trace Lasergrrips incorporate an eye-visible laser inside a grip panel—batteries, laser, everything right there in the grip. They are available for most popular models of service handguns, revolvers and autos. I tested a pair that were fitted to a 9mm Beretta Elite II pistol. Installation was a simple matter of removing the stock grip panels and installing the Lasergrrips. The fit on the Beretta frame was excellent—snug and secure.

The laser module is housed in the right grip panel. A sliding on-off switch on the bottom of the panel allows the sight to be turned off for storage. For normal carry, the switch is placed in the “on” position.

Depressing a pressure-sensitive second switch—a long raised rib on the front of the grip panel—then activates the laser beam.

Gripping the pistol with either the right or left hand serves to activate the switch. I found it quite easy to turn the beam on or off simply by tightening or relaxing my grip.

Two tiny set screws on the top and side of the laser module are used to regulate point-of-impact. There are no clicks or graduation marks, but sighting proved straightforward. It only took half a dozen shots to get the laser dot and point-of-impact to coincide at 25 yards.

The compactness of current laser sights is astonishing. For all practical purposes, the Lasergrrips added no bulk or weight. The sight had no effect on holstering or operation of the gun. During fairly extensive handling and firing by a number of shooters, the sight proved reliable and the point-of-impact was unchanged.



...AND THEN THERE ARE THE NEGATIVES

The laser beam source can be observed from downrange and could serve as a target. After firing several shots, smoke hanging in front of the gun showed the laser beam as a clear line leading to the firing position. Sound tactics are to change position, if possible, after firing, and to keep the beam turned off except as needed.

When practicing building entry tactics with their laser-sighted MP-5s, officers had noted that when a suspect confronted them and was hit with several laser dots, there could be confusion

about whose dot belonged to whom. Lasers designed to pulse in recognizable patterns would be one solution.

Crimson Trace Lasergrrips are offered for Beretta, Officers and 1911-style pistols, the Ruger Mk II and several SIGs, and Taurus and S&W J- and K-frame revolvers. A frame-mounted version is offered for Glock pistols. For more info, contact Crimson Trace, Dept. AH, 8089 Cirrus Dr., Beaverton, OR 97008; phone: (800) 442-2406 or (503) 627-9992; fax: (503) 627-0166.

Tactical Pluses For Laser Sights

For input on the tactical utility of laser sights, I gave the Lasergrip-equipped Beretta to a local police department for feedback from SWAT team members. It was used for night firing drills, and for low-light training in simulated building entries, alley searches and felony vehicle stops.

Training: In accuracy drills at 25 yards on 8" steel plates, most officers had no difficulty making consistent hits. When misses did occur, both shooter and instructor could clearly see the dot being pulled off target, usually a result of a poor trigger press. Concentrating on keeping the dot on target while smoothly releasing the trigger resulted in improved trigger control.

Confidence: In simulated low-light alley and building searches, officers commented that the speed and ease of acquiring potential threats with the laser dot gave a tremendous confidence boost. Instead of having to shift focus from target to sights, they could stay focused on the subject while using the laser dot to index the pistol.

Intimidation: In simulated high-risk felony car stops, officers would remain behind cover while spotting the laser on the dashboard or center of the steering wheel.

An officer playing the role of the felon commented, “When that bright red light comes on in front of you, it’s like some alien spacecraft came up behind and has you locked in its sights. It’s paralyzing. You just know they aren’t bluffing and they won’t miss.”

Awkward Shooting Positions: It’s not always possible to bring the gun to eye level and use the sights. With a laser, that isn’t necessary. As long as you can see the target and the dot, it’s possible to place an accurate shot.



Shooting? Reloading? Think DILLON

AT 500

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RL 550B

XL 650

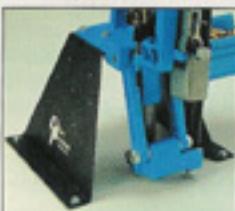
RL 1050

SL 900



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 RL 1050 Kit A15-22215 27.95



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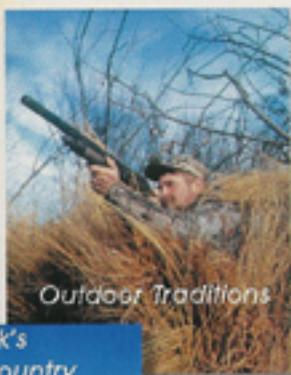
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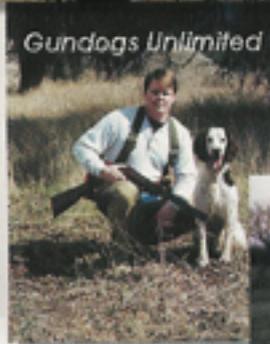
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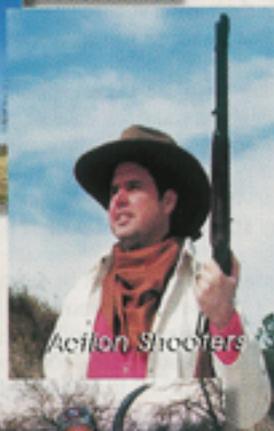
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A TOUCHY-FEELY SORT OF BILL OF RIGHTS SO WE CAN ALL FEEL SAFE

The November 2000 issue of *Epidemiology* reports that, based on a nationwide survey of 2,500 adults, 50 percent said that they would feel less safe if more people in their communities owned guns. Only 14 percent said they would feel safer. Lead author, Dr. Matthew Miller of the Harvard School of Public Health, told the Reuters Health news service, "Our study found that gun ownership on the whole imposed a psychological burden rather than a benefit."

The survey found that women were 70 percent more likely than men to report they would feel less safe, and minorities were 50 percent more likely than whites to say they would feel less safe. According to Dr. Miller, "In making decisions about gun policy, the voices of minorities and women need to be elicited."

It seems clear from these remarks that the authors of the survey and article believe that people's fears and emotions provide legitimate grounds for passage of gun-control laws.

The article called to mind an argument I encountered during a presentation on CCW laws that I made at the Cato Institute in 1997, upon the 10th anniversary of the Florida statue. In the point/counterpoint session that followed the presentation, my opponent, a representative from the Center to Prevent Handgun Violence, argued that the presence of guns in society made him feel less safe and that his right to feel safe had to be balanced against my right to own a gun.

His right to feel safe, based on a belief that guns were dangerous, was of equal weight to my right to feel safe, based on a belief that guns could protect me. Thus, a mere battle of conflicting feelings, in which, presumably, the more numerous group has the right to prevail and force its will upon others for the sake of its own peace of mind.

Here, too, we see the notion that people's fears or sentiments are supposed to provide legitimate grounds for the exercise of legal authority over others. We have reached the point where even social scientists argue for laws to address people's feelings and states of mind. Call

it psychotropic government: law as Prozac for the perpetually anxious.

Law As Prozac

Let's explore this notion. Suppose that a group of scholars argued that laws should be enacted to separate the residential areas in which whites live from those in which African-Americans live, based on the fears that whites had of being criminally victimized by African-Americans.

Or suppose it was argued that, although such concerns and fears ought not be the sole basis for enacting laws, those feelings of whites should be taken into account, or to use Dr. Miller's words, that "the voices" of whites "need to be elicited" in determining proper zoning laws.

Now we all know what the response would be, and rightly so. The racism in such an argument is reprehensible, and laws enacted on such a basis would violate the constitutional requirement of equal treatment under the laws.

But, from this example, we know a few things. If we are intellectually honest and consistent, we must admit that mere feelings, emotions, fears or "psychological burdens" are not legitimate bases for laws that override a genuine individual right. Those who recommend that we take people's fears or desires to feel cozy into account as bases for passing gun-control laws cannot possibly believe, therefore, that gun ownership or use—such as carry for self-defense—is a bona fide individual right.

In the mind of the public health advocate who is seeking to alleviate the "psychological burdens" imposed by the presence of guns, keeping and bearing arms has far less stature than a true right, and does not truly affect any right of liberty of the individual, but is something that is properly subject to legal limits based on people's mere feelings about it.

Or, to say the same thing in another way, individual liberty is held in so little regard that mere feelings are sufficient to cast it aside. The individual himself is held in so little regard that mere sentiments of the majority are sufficient justification to deprive him of his liberty.

Continued on page 79

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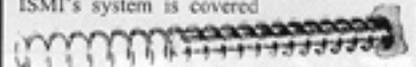
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when you wear one. Most dialed-in people will be able to ID your fanny pack as a gun-carry system, but dialed-in people are not your problem. The cognosenti are, for the most part, good guys.

Note that if you wear a fanny pack to carry your sidearm, most police officers recognize in an instant that you are going heeled. Large handguns require large fanny packs, making them easy to spot and even attracting the attention of clueless people. Thus, I recommend that fanny packs be

used with compact-size handguns.

For my money, I want a small-size fanny pack that is made of leather, or at least a non-black nylon. The pistols that I use in my fanny packs are S&W 3913, Wilson Compact CQB and Glock M19 and M27. Checking with friends who use fanny packs turned up one SIG P239, a couple of compact Kimbers, numerous Kahrs and one .380 Beretta 85.

Also, I always carry at least one spare magazine, plus a SureFire flashlight and a copy of my CCW or agency credentials. I typically attach my pager to the fanny-pack belt, and also carry a utility knife like a Swiss Army or a folder from Spyderco or Benchmade. If you prefer not to carry a SureFire flashlight, at least get a Photon Micro Light.



How To Train With A Fanny Pack

Practice drawing and firing from your fanny pack just like you would from a belt holster. Your training should include both deployment and replacement of the pistol back into the fanny pack. One should also train to open the fanny pack, draw and fire with the use of just the strong hand.

When conducting your range training, always be aware of where your muzzle is pointed. Note that if you stand facing downrange in a normal manner, the muzzle of your sidearm in the fanny pack will often be pointed at the person standing next to you.

Start standing with your body facing more to the side so that the muzzle of the handgun while still in the fanny pack is in fact pointed more downrange. Make the draw with the pistol pointed in a downrange, safe direction and then step into your normal firing stance as the pistol is presented to the target.

This technique will provide a safer range session and not compromise your tactical sidearm presentation. Remember to step back into this sideways stance while replacing the handgun into the fanny pack.

Used properly, the fanny pack provides a low-key carry mode and still allows for a quick presentation of the pistol. With practice, the fanny-pack method of carry can be quick and effective. If you fail to practice and train with a fanny pack, then when it really counts and the bullets are flying, expect your efforts to snatch your pistol to be a fumble-fingered disaster.



TACTICS FOR ALL SEASONS

The means by which we carry a sidearm can change from day to day and from season to season. Ideally, a man carries his sidearm the same way constantly. I prefer to carry my pistol on my belt in either a good concealment holster or an inside-the-pants (ITP) scabbard.

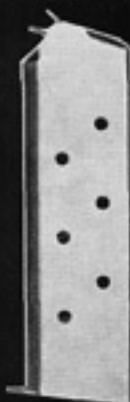
Over the years, I have tried many carry methods. I have favorites, like the Sparks "Summer Special" and the Alessi DOJ. The Sparks CCAT and

Alessi CQC are also outstanding. Lately, I have been packing my two carry guns, a Compact Wilson CQB and a Glock M19, in a Blade Tech ITP holster. Additionally, I use Blade Tech holsters for IDPA competition and a Safariland M6004 as my duty rig.

There is nearly always an S&W air-weight Centennial in my pocket. Currently, I am testing the Safariland M25 pocket holster for the little Smith snubby, and I find it excellent.

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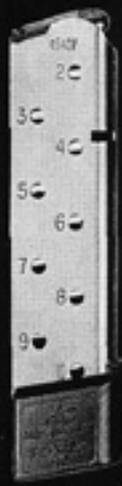
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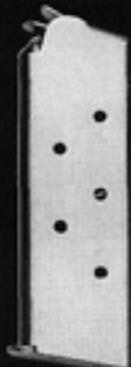
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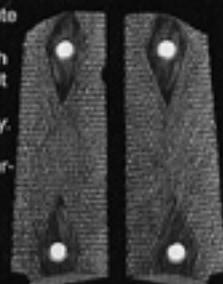


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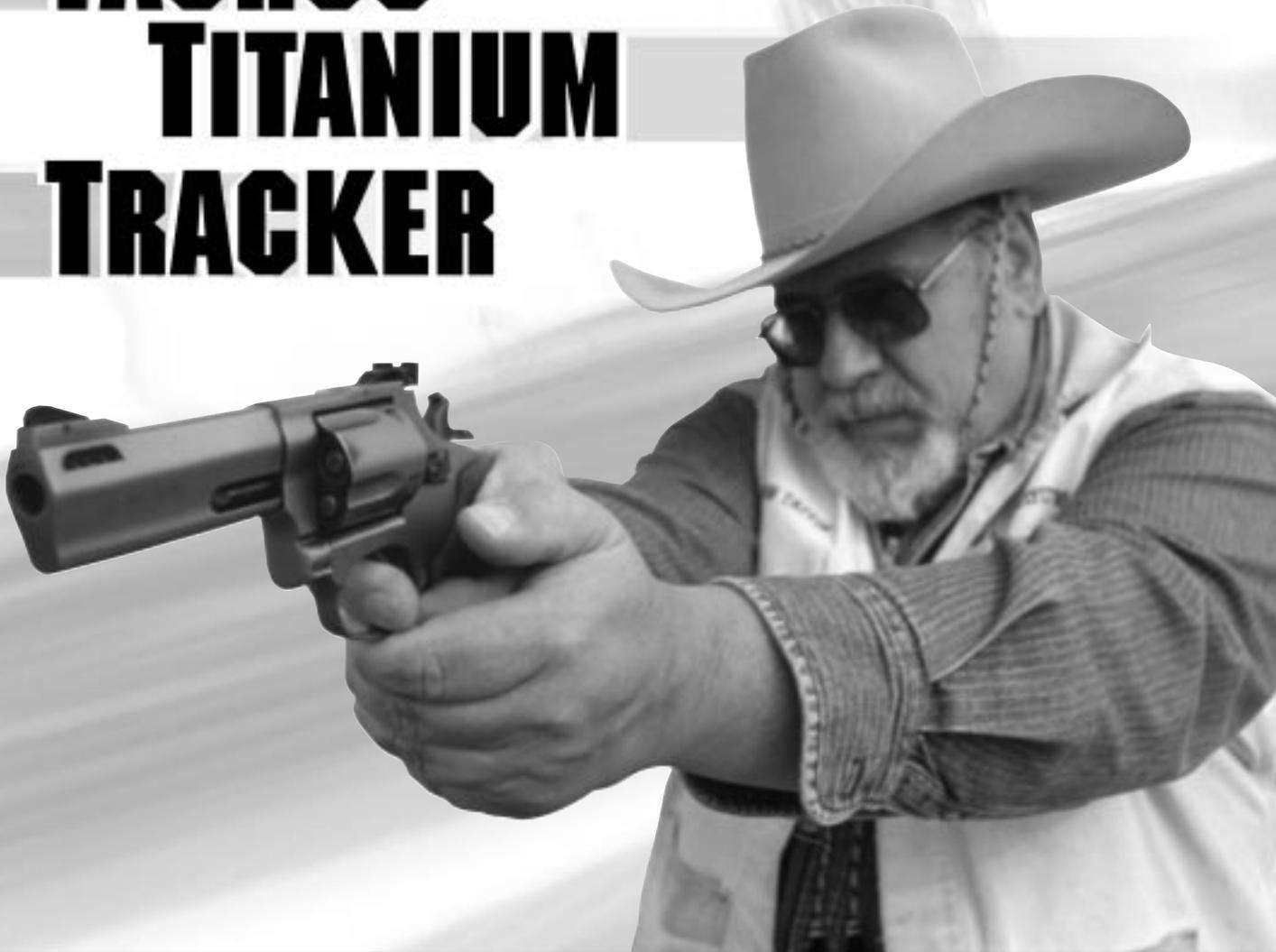
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TAURUS TITANIUM TRACKER



COULD THIS BE THE GUN THAT REVIVES THE .41 MAGNUM?

BY JOHN TAFFIN

From its very beginning in the '60s, the .41 Magnum has had a difficult life. Many of the gunwriters of the time saw no useful purpose for it, and, for most of the past 35 years, it has been the cartridge of the connoisseur, never really being afforded the respect it deserves.

At one time, Smith & Wesson offered blue, nickel and stainless .41 Magnums with their Models 57 and 657, while Ruger first housed the .41 Magnum in their three-screw model, or Old Model Blackhawks, of the mid-'60s, then later in the New Model Blackhawks, beginning in 1973. Today, Smith & Wesson only

offers the .41 Magnum in a 6" Model 657, and Ruger has dropped the Bisley Model.

Freedom Arms has gone in the opposite direction and chambered both of their high-quality five-shot revolvers, the full-sized Model 83 and the mid-frame Model 97, in the .41 Magnum.

The "middle magnum" is now offered in a new lightweight Titanium Tracker model by Taurus. This latest .41 Magnum by Taurus is what we are looking at here.

Titanium is the firearms material for the 21st century, with several manufac-

Continued on page 32

Lee's Twentieth
Anniversary

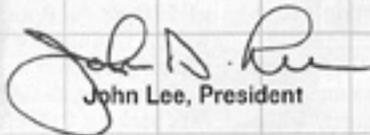
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For a "dead" caliber, there are a lot of lively loads for the .41 Magnum.



turers now offering ultra lightweight pocket pistols and bigbore sixguns manufactured from this metal which is much stronger than its weight would acknowledge. We've come a long way with handguns, from iron to steel to stainless to alloy to titanium.

With the Tracker, the cylinder and barrel remain of steel construction, as do parts like the hammer and trigger, while most of the rest of the gun is manufactured from titanium.

How much difference does this make in actual ounces? Making a comparison is somewhat akin to an apples-and-oranges

situation because Taurus doesn't make the same gun in steel. My old 4" Model 57 weighs 42.5 ozs. The Taurus Titanium comes in at 23 ozs., and if we add the Bianchi #5BHL holster and five rounds of 170 gr. JHP ammunition, the total weight is still only 33.5 ozs. That makes a huge difference at the end of the day.

Of course, the day of most peace officers packing a revolver is long passed. At least for now. No, this lightweight powerhouse will be most popular with backpackers, hikers, fishermen, campers, hunters, outdoorsmen, woods-bummers, desert rats and anyone else that desires an

easy-to-carry, unobtrusive sidearm.

The Taurus Titanium Tracker .41 Magnum could well be looked upon as the ultimate combination of power and portability. If one goes to a smaller firearm, the required caliber is also smaller; go to a larger bore and the cylinder and frame become too big.

Vital Stats

The Tracker is a 4", double-action revolver with adjustable sights. The rear sight blade is slanted to reduce glare, while the front sight is of the ramp variety with a pinned-in, quick-draw

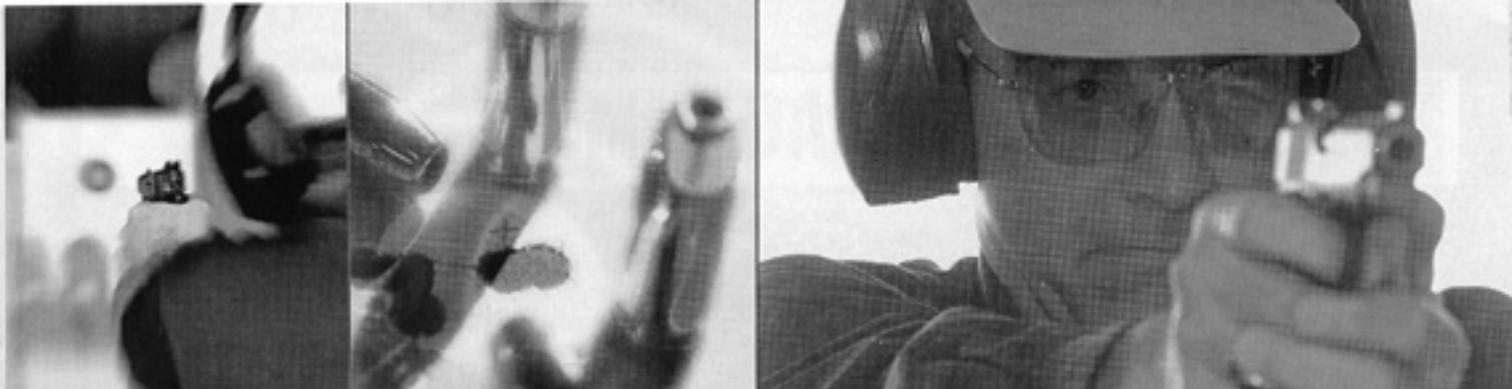
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The ribbed grips are so good for taming recoil that Taffin thinks Taurus should sell them for other guns.



A smooth-faced, narrow trigger made the lightweight .41 easier to shoot well.



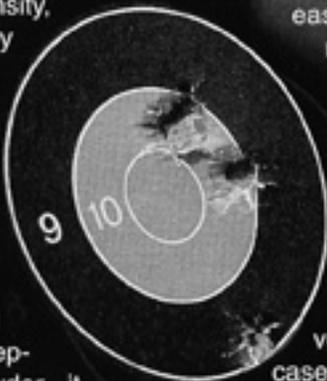
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SR 7625 is an ideal target load powder. Its easy-flowing, small grain size produces the repeat-charge uniformity that leads to very consistent velocities and excellent accuracy.

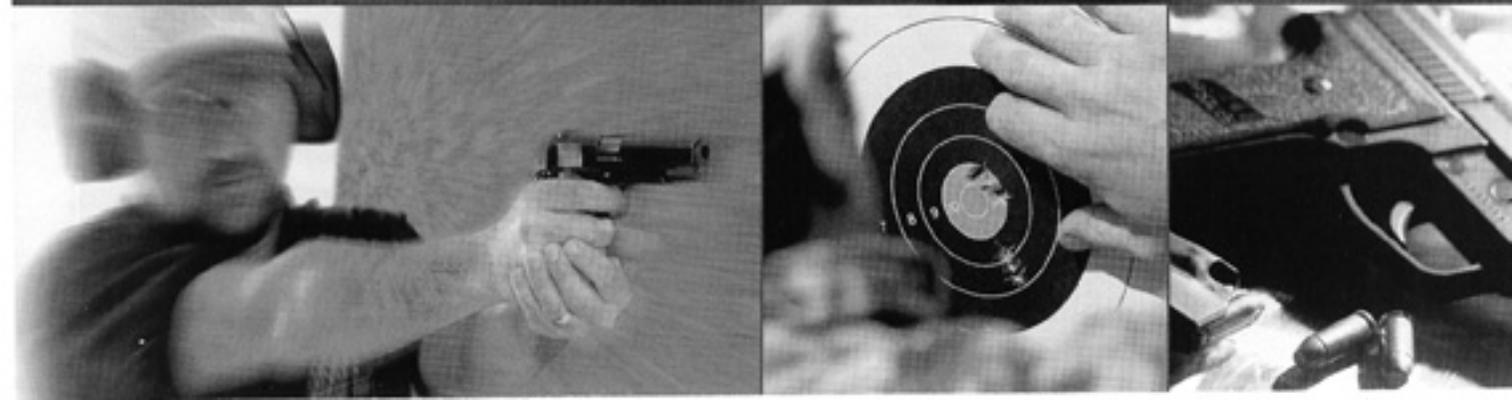
SR 4756 is a slightly slower-burning powder that safely provides medium to higher velocities in non-magnum cases.

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THE ORIGIN OF MAGNUMS

BY JOHN TAFFIN

If you are a relatively new shooter, or even one who has arrived on the sixgunning scene in the last 20 years, chances are pretty good that you may not know the origins of Smith & Wesson's trio of magnum cartridges.

The first one, the .357 Magnum, arrived on the stage in 1935, mainly to fill a need for a better cartridge to arm the nation's peace officers. The .38 Special, with its standard issue 158 gr. roundnose bullet, had proven woefully inadequate against the new crop of bank robbers and gangsters in their high-speed automobiles. The .357 Magnum not only gave peace officers a round that would penetrate automobiles, but it also proved to be an exceptional outdoorsman's round in the Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum revolver.

It has been our most popular magnum cartridge for more than 65 years. Combining adequate power for many, probably most, situations with relatively low recoil, it also has an exceptional defensive shooting record of one-shot stops with the 125 gr. JHP load.

While the .357 Magnum was developed mainly for peace-officer use, the .44 Magnum took a different trail. Shooters such as Elmer Keith had been full-house loading the .44 Special for nearly 30 years when Smith & Wesson and Remington finally listened and brought forth the .44 Magnum sixgun and ammunition, which together gave the outdoorsman and hunter the most powerful and accurate combination offered up to that time.

It was not then, nor is it now, given high marks as a peace-officer's weapon of choice, simply because it is too powerful for most people to handle as a defensive weapon. Keith touted his .44 Special sixguns and loads for outdoor use, mainly hunting and long-range shooting, and that is exactly at what the .44 Magnum excels.

Keith asked for a 250 gr. bullet at 1,200 fps, and, while many current factory .44 Magnum loads are at this level or slightly

above, the original loading in 1956 was nearly 1,500 fps.

So with the development of these two cartridges, we had a peace-officer's cartridge that also doubled as an outdoorsman's cartridge in the .357 Magnum, as well as a superb bigbore hunting round with the .44 Magnum.

It would be easy to say all the bases were covered by the mid-'50s. However, in the early '60s, there were those who felt we needed a new cartridge, mainly for police use. They felt the .38 Special was still inadequate, we did not have the bullets we have today for the .357 Magnum, the 1911 .45 Auto had not yet been accepted for police use, and the .44 Magnum was too powerful.

Men like Bill Jordan felt we needed a .40 caliber sixgun and load for police use. Their idea was a good one, but good things went astray when it hit the drawing board. The resulting sixgun and load, called the .41 Magnum, proved to be another excellent outdoorsman's combination, but was a little too much for peace officer use.

The new guns, Smith & Wesson's top-of-the-line Model 57, which was simply a Model 29 in the new .41 Magnum chambering, as well as the slightly less bulky and not so finally finished Model 58 Military & Police, were simply too big and too heavy for most peace-officers to be willing to carry all day.

Two versions of .41 Magnum ammunition were offered in 1964, a full-house Magnum version with a 210 gr. jacketed bullet at a full 1,500 fps, and a lead-bullet load at less than 1,000 fps.

Over the next 30 years, the .41 Magnum was chambered in sixguns by Smith & Wesson and also by Ruger, in both the Blackhawk and Bisley Models. Smith also offered under-lugged barrel versions, while Colt never saw fit to chamber any of their production guns in .41 Magnum.

blade with a red insert. The smooth trigger and checkered hammer are both case-colored, while the entire finish of the Tracker looks like bead-blasted stainless.

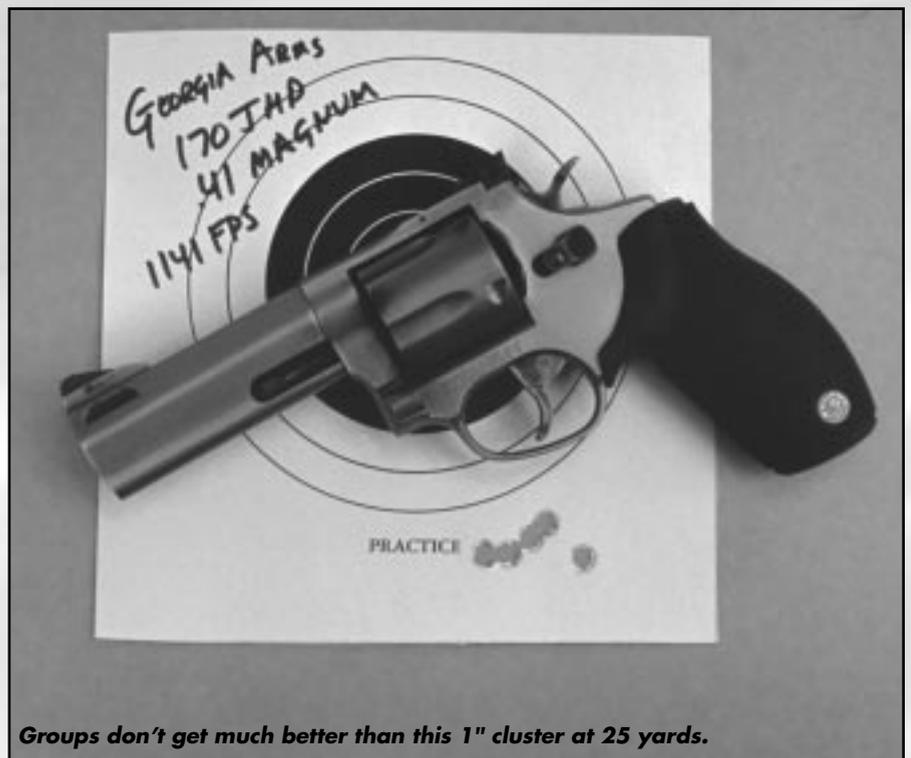
Taurus has long been known for smooth double-action operation on their revolvers. However, this Tracker is not quite as smooth in operation as other larger and smaller Taurus double-action revolvers I have worked with. The single-action trigger pull, at 4.75 lbs., is too heavy for such a lightweight revolver.

Recoil Considerations

Now, 23 ozs. is not much weight to counteract the recoil of full-house .41 Magnum loads; however, two features on the Tracker help reduce felt recoil. On each side of the front sight, one finds a slot cut into the barrel, with each slot containing four round ports. Actually, these ports are cut into the shroud and then into the barrel. The shroud is of the full-underlug style, enclosing and protecting the ejector rod.

Of greater effect for reducing felt recoil are the grips. Now, I am no great fan of

Continued on page 36



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For a walk in the woods, you'd be hard-pressed to beat a 23 oz. .41 Magnum in a classic Bianchi thumb break.

rubber grips; however, I do find them essential for heavy-recoiling handguns such as a Contender .45-70. Without the man-made material wrapped around this heavy-duty hunting single-shot, I believe—in fact, I *know*—I could not control it.

The same holds true for the Taurus Titanium Tracker .41 Magnum. This gun comes from the factory equipped with what must be—and I do not like to use this much-abused term—the most user-friendly grips ever placed on a revolver. Rubber? Yes. Ugly? Yes. Effective? Absolutely!

The designer of the grips certainly knew what he was about. They totally enclose the Tracker grip frame and are composed of soft rubber with small horizontal ribs forming a three-quarter oval around the grip, with the backstrap left smooth.

These rubber ribs form a most comfortable cushion for the shooting hand. They also provide a most secure feeling in cold, wet weather. Although some factory loads exhibit heavy recoil, the combination of porting and properly designed grips keeps this little .41 Magnum controllable.

A 170 gr. JHP at 1,300-plus fps out of a 23 oz. revolver has the capacity for being brutal to the shooter. Not so with this sixgun. I understand the rubber grips on the Tracker suffered a typo and came out “Ribber” in early advertising.

The name stuck, and these Ribber grips would be a welcome addition on many other heavy-recoiling sixguns from several manufacturers.

In fact, I would like to see some grip manufacturer come to an agreement with Taurus that allows these excellent grips to be offered for other guns.

The Taurus Titanium Tracker .41 Magnum was test-fired with eight factory rounds at both 15 and 25 yards. At the closer distance, most groups were at 1" or slightly above, while at 25 yards, 2" was the norm. Since the groups were fired from a lightweight, 4" revolver with a heavy trigger pull and using my high-mileage eyes, I would classify this as one excellent-shooting revolver.

If you are a regular reader, you are aware that my preference in sixguns runs to fancy guns with exotic grips carried in exquisite leather. However, there are times when function overshadows form. If you should happen to run into me in the mountains, forests or deserts of Idaho and I am trying to travel adequately armed and lightweight at the same time, don't be surprised if you spot a Taurus Titanium Tracker on my hip. 

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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.

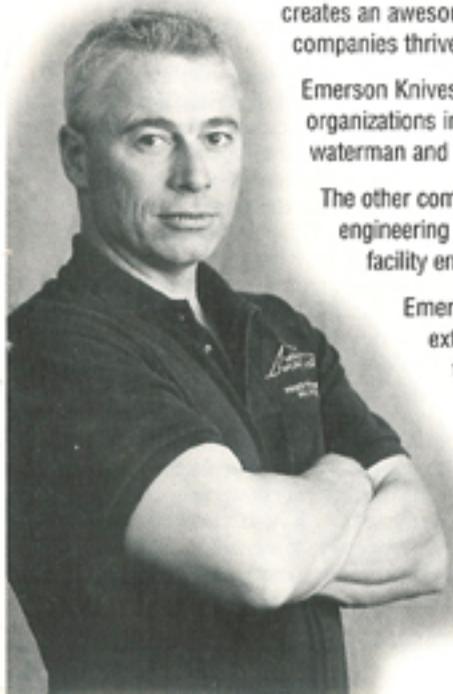
The other company motto is: **"Designed For Performance...Built For Extremes."**™ Straightforward design, precision engineering and high-resolution components, combined with a state of the art, aerospace qualified manufacturing facility embody our search for constant evolution and manufacturing excellence.

Emerson Knives have proven themselves in the most hostile environments on this planet. From the extreme limits of outer space to the blackest depths of the ocean, in steaming jungle rainforests and on the icy granite walls of the worlds tallest mountains, they have been called to task and have withstood the test.

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.



THE PRINCE OF POCKETS

Often, simple ideas turn into complex conceptualizations, but Michael Meredith, owner, operator and one-man-show at Pocket Concealment Systems (PCS), has kept his original inspiration at the forefront. His elegantly simple designs show great thought and even greater attention to detail in their final form. He tends to inspire loyal customers, too.

One of Mike's regulars sought me out and said if I had any brains at all, I'd give Mike a call. I then found out that Mike is a friend of Lou Alessi (of leather fame) and that sealed the deal. Lou is a grand gentleman of the game and any friend of his is, well, you know the rest.

It turned out to be a fun phone call. After Mike told me for the zillionth time just how much of a mentor Lou had been, I was sold. Some detailed discussions followed about various PCS designs, and soon a small box arrived. After checking out Mike's very nicely done catalog—clear photos, clearer text—I had high expectations. What I saw upon opening the box was superior workmanship and careful tending to the tiniest detail.

Mike's line concentrates on pocket holsters, and his designs have whittled away all that isn't necessary. One side is detail-

boned for fit while the "side-out" that faces the public is left smooth to better hide the hide.

He makes conventional belt holsters, IWB rigs and very clever magazine holders, which all exhibit the same quality, but I believe he is a wizard in the pocket, as it were.

His aptly named "French Curve" is not only easy on the eye, but, also, the deep set and gentle angle of the gun allow it to sit low in the pocket (think: Dockers) while still allowing a full firing grip when you go for the metal.

The nifty French curve "hooks" on the inside of the pocket, leaving the holster in the pocket when the gun comes out. Just like it's supposed to happen.

The "Redoubt" solves the problem of where-the-hell-do-I-put-my-spare-magazine-anyway? Why, in your pocket with the gun, of course. Through the magic of good design, Mike has managed to put the two together in such a way that one doesn't interfere with the other.

I'd want a big pants pocket for this one or, better yet, an outer coat pocket. My wife immediately adopted it for her Colt .380 Pocketlite, and it now rides in her purse. I lose more gear that way...



I hate junk. There is enough out there to sink the Bismarck, but when I get a chance to handle an actual, real-life quality rig, it makes it all worthwhile. This is definitely one of those times, and I'm not at all ashamed to say it.

In this age of rotten service, crummy products and seething attitudes, you have accidentally stumbled onto a solution to those woes. Give Mike a call, if you're in need.

The Pocket Prince can be found at PCS, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 10271, Baltimore, MD 21234; phone: (410) 426-9004; E-mail: PCS.inc@juno.com



LEATHER GOOP

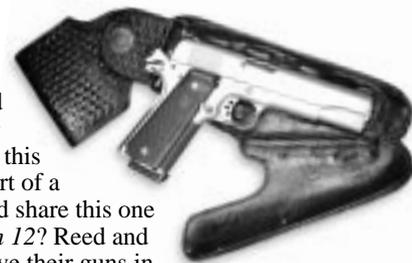
Rusty Sherrick, a holster maker, makes this slick stuff called "Hyde Glyde." A water-based goop, you can use it to shine up that old leather gear or, more importantly, put a dab here and a dab there to make the iron exit easier, as it were. I tried it and it seems to work just fine—no stinky smells or goopy fingers. You can get it from Rusty by calling (717) 361-7699.

The Hilarious Antics Of Cops And Their '70s Holsters

Rummaging in my old holster box the other day, I stumbled onto this classic. Since I'm sort of a classic myself, I thought I'd share this one with you. Remember *Adam 12*? Reed and Malloy would suddenly have their guns in their hands, and it amazed you. This is how they did it.

The "Safety Speed" shell closes around the gun, and a spring wants to open it back up in an awful bad way. A "secret" button in the trigger guard is pushed when your hand closes for a firing grip and *thwang!* open it comes and up you go.

The "Safety Speed" was several levels of cool when it was first introduced, but that was before lawyers ruled America. In my early days of law enforcement, we used to walk around and poke our fingers into the trigger guards of fellow officers' holsters to watch their Model 10s go clattering onto the tile. Great fun, that. I wouldn't advise it today.



4 SIZES

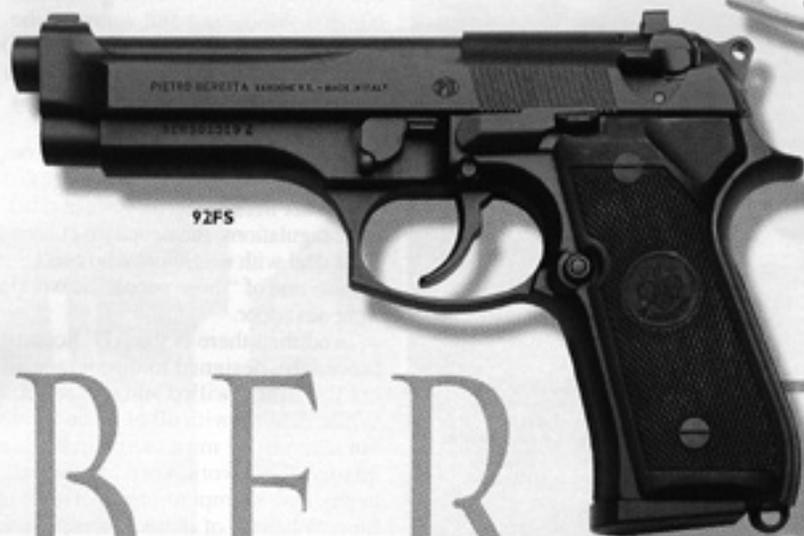
2 CALIBERS

2 FINISHES

92/96 FAMILY



92FS Compact Inox



92FS

The Beretta 92/96 Series pistols, the most tested and trusted personal defense firearms in history are now available in 14 different configurations. For every requirement, every shooter, there is a Beretta 92/96 Series pistol that's right for the job.

Every Beretta 92/96 Series pistol is manufactured with careful attention to detail and focus on performance. Three of the basic models of 92/96 Series pistols - the Full-Size, the Compact and the Brigadier - are available in 9mm and 40 S&W calibers, while the Compact Type M is available in 9mm. All four models are available with either black Brunton or Inox stainless steel finishes.



22LR Practice kit

Serious shooters spend a great deal of time keeping their skills in top form. This can be an expensive undertaking, so Beretta created a more economical route: the Beretta 22LR Practice Kit. This 8 piece kit quickly and easily converts your Beretta 92/96 Series pistol from 9mm or 40 S&W to 22LR, allowing you to practice with the less expensive ammunition. The low recoil of the 22LR caliber is ideal for training inexperienced shooters that need to master sight-picture and trigger-control fundamentals before tackling the recoil associated with larger caliber pistols. The slide features a fully adjustable rear sight, and a 10-round magazine is included. See it at your Beretta dealer today.

The Compact features a 10-round double stack magazine, while the Type M's single stack 8-round magazine allows a slimmer, flatter profile for those with smaller hands. The Brigadier incorporates all the high performance characteristics of the traditional 92 Series pistols, plus a heavier, recontoured slide to reduce felt recoil and a removable front sight.

Regardless of size caliber, every Beretta 92/96 Series pistol is manufactured with painstaking attention to detail and focus on performance. That's why military personnel, law enforcement officials, and civilians alike have come to know that there is no alternative to a Beretta.



92FS Brigadier Inox



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HOW TO DEAL WITH A GUNSMITH

Dealing with a gunsmith is a very pleasant experience in most cases, but sometimes it turns into a nightmare. Many gunsmiths have come out of other businesses in which they were an employee stashed in a back room, where contact with the general public was rare.

Gunsmiths can be ex-machinists, ex-military armorers or other craftsmen who were gunsmithing at home as a hobby for their own entertainment and for friends. They had little or no pressure on them to get work out on time and at a reasonable price and were never confronted with the daily operation of a business. In fact, they were embarrassed to charge their friends for doing something they loved to do, so most of the work they did was free or at cost.

All of a sudden, this home-shop gunsmith reaches a skill level where he is in demand from outside his friendship group, and he either starts gunsmithing at night and on weekends, or decides to retire and work at it full time. This is where the problems begin.

Loaded with exquisite skills and desire, but with no busi-



Photo By Nyle Leatham

ness background, the new gunsmith hangs a shingle out and waits for the money to roll in by the barrel. It is not too long before he finds out there is a little more to running a gun business than he first thought.

Other than obtaining a local business license, dealing with zoning codes, getting a sales tax license and all sorts of other local regulations, the neophyte gunsmith must deal with neighbors who can't believe one of "those people" is working right next door.

And then there is the ATF licensing procedure, designed to discourage all but the strong-willed and persistent. While dealing with all of these faceless bureaucrats, he must maintain the high quality of his work, keep his customers happy and attempt to turn work out on time. When all of these interruptions come to a head in the gunsmith's little shop, the phone starts ringing with customers on the other end.

Lord help him! What was a nice little pastime for him and his friends is now becoming Excedrin headache number one, and running the business is taking more time than gunsmithing.

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Close to 100 percent of the gunsmiths who have been removed from the rolls of professional organizations in the firearms industry have been given the boot not for poor skills, but for bad business practices.

To solve problems with a customer, a frustrated gunsmith might scream at, criticize or curse the customer, hoping he will go away—and in many cases, he will. You, as a consumer, must arm yourself with a few rules you can use in dealing with custom gunsmiths who want to do beautiful custom work, but who just do not have the business skills to make you happy.

When initiating business with a custom gunsmith, *never give him any money up front* unless the gunsmith is building you a firearm from scratch and needs to purchase the frame, slide and other expensive components. If you are just sending your firearm for repairs or custom work, no deposit should be required. He has possession of your gun,

which is usually worth more than \$500.

And, by the way, paying money up front many times slows the job down instead of speeding it up.

If the gunsmith promises to have your pea shooter ready in eight to 10 weeks, and 14 weeks later you have not heard from him, call and ask about the progress, but don't be too concerned. Gunsmiths usually work alone and have a jillion things come up, like dove season, that interrupt or delay work.

However, if your pistol is promised to you in 10 to 12 weeks and is still not ready at 24 weeks, you should be concerned and *expect an original reason for the delay*. If you have paid a lot of money up front, you should ask for an immediate refund or the finished pistol. If you do not get satisfaction within two weeks, it is time for legal action or a call to the state attorney-general. Every business you deal with works like this, and the gunsmith should be no different.



Over the last 30 years of pistol-smithing for men and women, I have dealt with some of the finest people in the world. Many of these folks have become close friends. They entrust valuable guns, including family heirlooms, to me, accepting my word that quality work will be performed in the approximate time contracted.

In return, the quality gunsmiths of the American Pistolsmiths Guild and the American Custom Gunmakers Guild, along with independent gunsmiths around the United States, owe their customers fine work and good business practices.



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Taffin TESTS

By John Taffin

Fancy double rig by Dusty Johnson holds a pair of Colts.



FROM OUT OF THE PAST, MORE GREAT LEATHER FOR SIXGUNS

A wise man once said you cannot go back, but he was wrong. I can go back—at least in my mind—and welcome anything that in some small way allows me to catch a fleeting glimpse of the glorious days of the Old West.

Learning to appreciate stepping back in time is just what I have gained from Walt Ostin, Mike Kirkpatrick and Dusty Johnson, three master leathersmiths. These three men specialize in regressing to a time that was less threatening, less stressful, yes, even gentler. These three men have one thing in common—period leather. Sixgun leather. Leather that conjures up the thundering hoofbeats of the great horse Silver!

Rawhide Walt Ostin

Eddie Janis of Peacemaker Specialists introduced me to “Rawhide” Walt Ostin of Custom Gun Leather. Ostin is a six-gunner from Canada who specializes in turning out top-quality leather. Ostin’s Western leather is of three types: Old West, B-Western or TV Cowboy, any of which is fine for most cowboy shooting matches. Most shooters, Ostin said, prefer the authenticity of the Old West style.

Variations of the Mexican Loop-style

Continued on page 81

From left to right: Rawhide Walt Ostin’s Colorado rig for the Colt Single Action Army; Colt 1860 Army .44’s rest in the Kirkpatrick Model 1865 Prospector rig; Custom Gun Leather’s beautifully replicated Lone Ranger rig.



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RIFLE OF THE YEAR

Marlin Firearms

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marlinfirearms.com



PRIZE 5

HANDGUN OF THE YEAR

Taurus USA

PT-111 Titanium Millennium
9mm pistol • taurususa.com

PRIZE 6

SHOTGUN OF THE YEAR

Benelli USA

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benelliusa.com

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PRIZE 3
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PRIZE 3
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PRIZE 7
AMMUNITION OF THE YEAR

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The AYOOB FILES

RUNNING GUNFIGHT: THE JIM MORGAN INCIDENT

Situation: It's "cops versus Crips" as the armed robbers empty their pistols into the patrol car.

Lesson: The vicious lust to murder a deputy is no match for courageous determination and professional teamwork.

At approximately 8 o'clock on the morning of January 3, 1990, two men armed with semiautomatic pistols forced their way into the home of Joyce Hooker in Apple Valley, Calif. The men leveled their guns at Mrs. Hooker, who was 17 weeks pregnant, and her two-year-old daughter, and explained they would both die if the woman didn't accompany them to the check-cashing office where she worked in Victorville, some 20 miles away, and open the safe for them.

Mrs. Hooker saw no choice but to comply. The men forced her and the little girl onto the floor of the backseat of her car, and headed for their target, the Park Center QuikCash.

Mrs. Hooker was wise not to resist. One of the gunmen was Barry Conway, 28, a stone killer already implicated in four cold-blooded murders. Alongside the lean and wolfish-looking Conway was moon-faced Nehemiah Robinson, 23, whose lack of facial hair, including eyebrows, seemed incongruous with his bushy Afro. Robinson had been with Conway a few months earlier when they had murdered one female cashier and wounded another in the course of a similar robbery of a check-cashing office in Barstow, Calif., an atrocity committed in front of one of the victim's children. Both men were gang members, belonging to a Crips set from Los Angeles.

Shortly after 9 a.m., the vehicle pulled to a stop near the QuikCash. Conway and Robinson waited until their getaway driver, Anthony Carl Jackson, had arrived and was in place. Then they brought Mrs. Hooker and her daughter inside at gunpoint.

Desperate and flustered, the kidnapped woman tried to open the safe. It wouldn't budge. She tried again. It remained steadfastly shut. The safe had a time release which she literally couldn't bypass to save her life. By now Conway and Robinson were expressing the murderous frustration that had led them to kill before.

Then came the moment that probably saved her and her daughter's lives. A Brink's truck pulled up outside, and an armed courier stepped out for his routinely scheduled stop at the QuikCash. As the courier came to the door, Joyce Hooker summoned the courage to blurt that they were being robbed. The courier's hand went to his weapon as he ducked back and then sprinted toward the armored truck, bobbing and weaving. Recognizing what was going on, his partner behind the wheel of the Brink's vehicle hit his siren.

The well-orchestrated kidnap/robbery was suddenly jarred off course. Outside, Jackson was so panicked he almost raced off in the red Hyundai getaway car and left his companions behind. Inside, Conway and Robinson panicked, too, and ran into the parking lot, leaving the woman and her child uninjured.

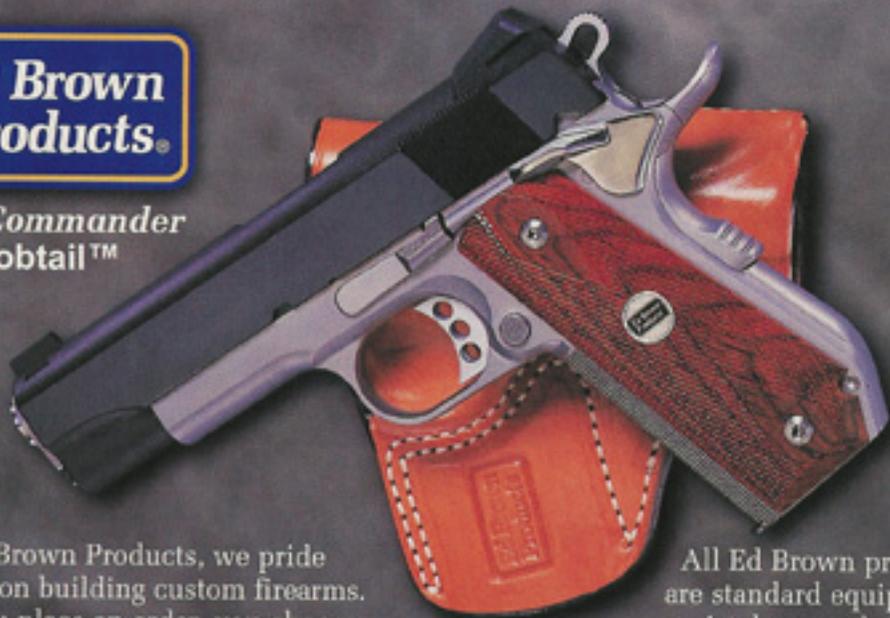
Before they jumped into the getaway car and sped off, Conway snapped a pistol shot at the armored truck to vent his homicidal frustration. For Barry Conway, it was the first shot of the day. It wouldn't be the last.

Continued on page 84

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A Great Gunsmith For Sixguns: Tom Sargis of Bozeman Trail Arms

You and I, and probably even Aunt Millie, know that today it is a fact of life that most sixguns, be they double- or single-action, domestic or foreign, can benefit greatly from an action job performed by a competent 'smith. Therein lies the rub—finding that gunsmith to whom you can

trust your prized possession.

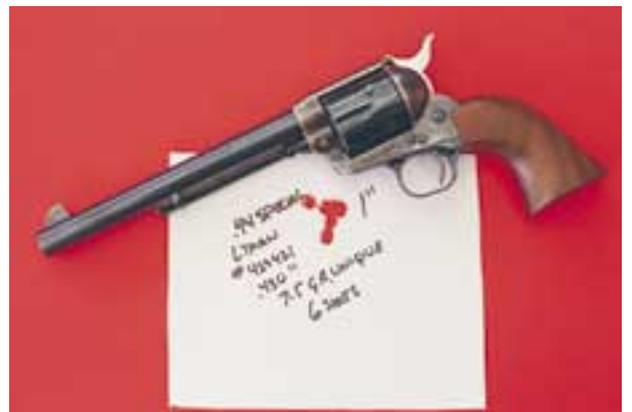
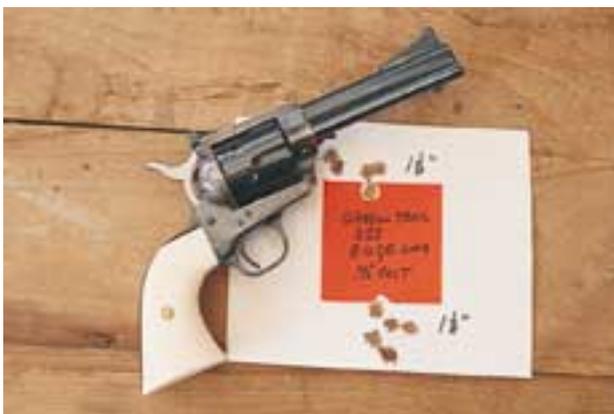
The great rise in the sport of cowboy shooting has brought forth many great leathercrafters and gunsmiths, but it has also revealed that anyone with a file, a stone or a sewing needle thinks he can tune sixguns or work beautiful leather.

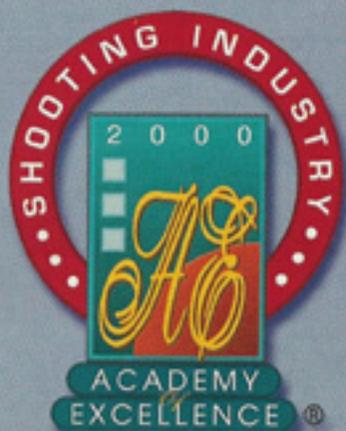
I have mentioned several sixgunsmiths over the years in these pages and will continue to do so as I “discover”

them. My latest find is Tom Sargis of Bozeman Trail Arms. Sargis is a one-man shop specializing in making single-actions sing a fine tune. He is also a grip maker who understands what single-action grips are supposed to feel like.

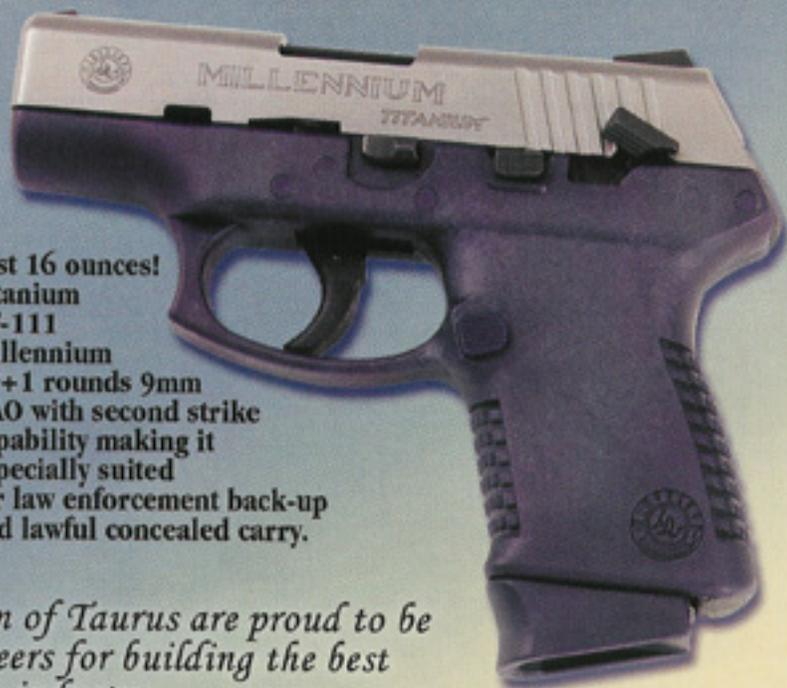
I first ran into Tom on the ‘net, as he maintains a website answering questions from a gunsmith’s perspective. About the same time, I found a used Third Genera-

Continued on page 104





Handgun of the Year

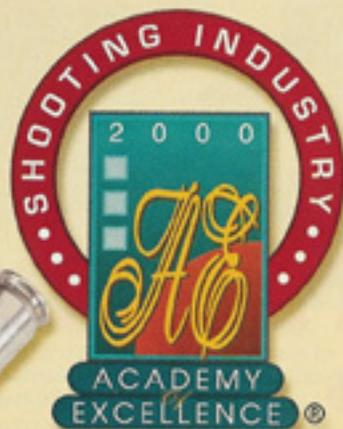


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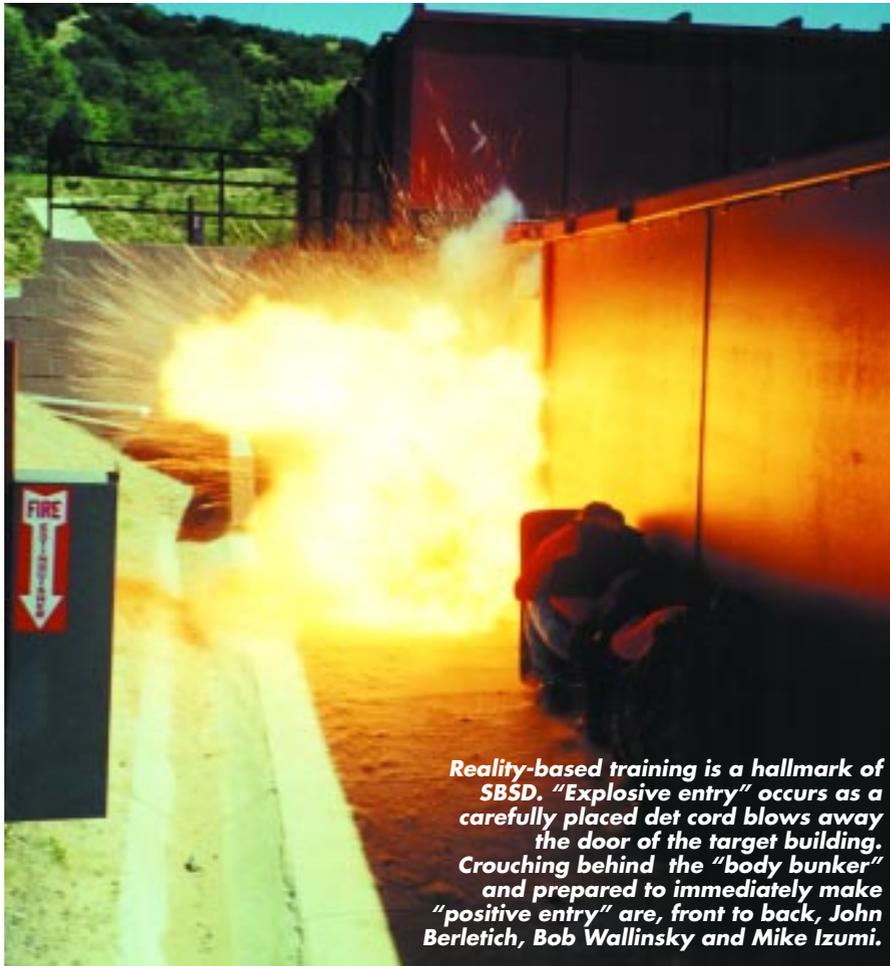
Portrait Of An Enlightened Firearms Policy

Sheriff Gary Penrod of the San Bernardino (Calif.) Sheriff's Dept. puts the safety of his personnel at the top of his list of priorities. For many years, his agency issued the 9mm Glock 17 with the 147 gr. subsonic hollowpoints recommended by the FBI. In a survey of his people, however, he discovered that while most were very happy with the Glock pistol, a majority didn't feel that this caliber/ammo combination gave them enough stopping power to engender a feeling of security. They said they wanted .45s.

Sheriff Penrod obliged. Last year, the department switched to the Glock 21 in .45 ACP. Those in plainclothes assignments were issued the Glock 30, a compact version of the same weapon. Deputies carry 14 rounds of 230 gr. Winchester Ranger SXT +P .45 ACP in the full-size "uniform" Glocks, and 11 rounds of the same in the compact "plainclothes" guns. Uniformed personnel carry two spare magazines, while at least one must be worn when on duty in "soft clothes." The service holster is Safariland's SLS (Self-Locking System), a design that gives both snatch-resistant security and speed of natural draw, plus speed and ease of re-securing the sidearm as the officer closes in to apply handcuffs. The issued plainclothes holster for the G30 is a leather hip scabbard by Aker.

Some 97 percent of the department has gone with the issue Glock .45 since the change, says Cpl. John Berletich, SBSB's chief firearms instructor. However, the sheriff's long-standing policy of broad discretionary choice by personnel in the field remains in place. Those officers who preferred the fit of the smaller Glock may keep it. Deputies are still authorized to carry Beretta, Ruger, SIG and Smith & Wesson pistols in 9mm or .45.

SBSB recently adopted the potent Winchester 127 gr. +P+ hollowpoint for those who wish to continue with the 9mm. This police-only load has established an excellent stopping-power track record. The 9mm autos and .38 revolvers remain popular as off-duty and backup weapons.



Reality-based training is a hallmark of SBSB. "Explosive entry" occurs as a carefully placed det cord blows away the door of the target building. Crouching behind the "body bunker" and prepared to immediately make "positive entry" are, front to back, John Berletich, Bob Wallinsky and Mike Izumi.

TRAINING

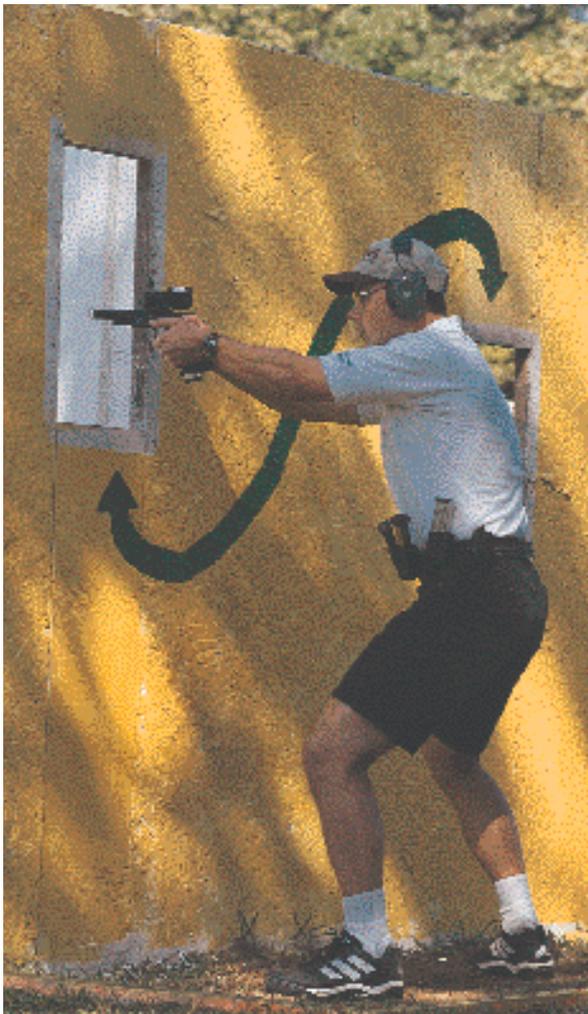
Personnel from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Dept. qualify a minimum of three times yearly with all weapons. The agency maintains three FATS simulators, one mobile for regular access by deputies at the more remote stations around the county. Live-fire "kill houses" and Simunitions force-on-force roleplaying are also staples of their in-service training. An estimated 3 million rounds of ammunition are fired in training each year.

Competition is encouraged to set a standard of excellence. The SBSB Shooting Team of Col. Berletich and deputies Glenn Alfaro, Mike Izumi and Bob Wallinsky have captured many honors at the Police Olympics, Glock matches, assorted IPSC events, and the department is just now getting into IDPA competition.

Sgt. Jim Morgan, a gunfight survivor and SWAT-team leader, recently took

command of the sheriff's Firearms Training Center. One of his first projects was a "firearms excellence program" along the lines of the department's approach to physical fitness with its "wellness program." The course of fire is the IDPA Qualifier, a tough 90-shot program that tests multiple armed survival skills. Deputies will be able to wear a medal displaying their rank earned, from Marksman to Master.

SBSB has long made a habit of intensively studying all gunfights involving their personnel. They determined that even Weaver shooters reverted to the Isosceles stance under stress, and that most deputies had been able to use their sights effectively. Based on this real-life input, their firearms training now emphasizes the Isosceles stance, a flash sight picture and StressFire shooting techniques.



Training Expertly, LIKE THE EXPERTS DO

Expert shooters are better because they train better. Average shooters stay average because they don't train effectively. Whether your interest in shooting is for recreation, competition, self-defense or hunting, your goal should be to get the most benefit from each practice session. After observing both world-class and average shooters practicing, several key differences became evident.

Experts have an objective for every training session. Ask the average shooter what the specific objective of a practice session is and he likely won't have an answer. Typically, he'll do some accuracy shooting, some one- and two-shot draws, a few reloads and maybe a few strong- and weak-hand shots, shoot a couple of Bill Drills or El Presidentes, then plink away any remaining ammunition at rocks in the backstop.

Experts often begin a session with precision shooting to check sights and trigger control and doing some drills to keep basic skills sharp. Then they move to the objective for that session—speedloads, perhaps, or weak-hand only. They'll have a specific goal, maybe 10 consecutive sub-one-second reloads, or at least 90 percent scores at 25 yards shooting weak-hand. Every training session should have a purpose and a means of measuring progress.



MAKE EVERY SHOT COUNT

Experts make every shot count. Experts don't plink or waste shots. They put their best effort into every shot. Plinking at rocks or shooting inattentively not only wastes time and ammunition, but it also reinforces sloppy and lazy mental habits. Quality of practice counts more than quantity.

Experts don't cheat themselves. Average shooters tend to forget their bad performances and assess themselves only on their best performances. The lament heard over and over at matches is, "I shot so much better in practice!" No, you occasionally shot better in practice. What counts is what you can do on demand.

I'll let you in on a secret— the experts shoot better in practice also. I've marveled at the ability of top shooters in matches, but I've seen them do things in practice sessions that left me bug-eyed. But they know that an occasional off-scale performance isn't a true measure of ability. They keep track of all scores, good and bad, and assess themselves honestly.

Match photos by
Nyle Leatham

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THE EXPERTS REALLY LIKE IT

Experts welcome the challenge of tough conditions. When it's raining or windy or they aren't feeling well, most shooters find something else to do. Experts relish tough conditions. They know that, whether in a match or on the street, they can't call a time-out because they have a headache or the sun is in their eyes.

They prepare for adverse conditions by training under adverse conditions. They practice the old military adage, "Hard in training, easy in combat."

Experts monitor equipment performance in practice sessions. I can't count the times I've seen average shooters have gun malfunctions on the range, clear them, shrug and carry on as though an occasional malfunction was normal and inevitable. Experts take malfunctions seriously.

I recall seeing three top shooters practicing together when one had a feedway stoppage. They examined it with the intensity of engineers studying a component of a space shuttle. They looked at the position of the round, the feedramp and breechface, the magazine, the cartridge itself. Not until they felt the problem had been diagnosed and corrected did they resume practice.

It can be argued that it is more important to develop the habit



of immediately clearing a malfunction than studying it to determine the reason. Certainly some training sessions should be devoted to malfunction clearance drills.

What the experts demonstrate is that the first priority is to get the equipment running properly. You're more likely to lose a match, or a gunfight, because your gun malfunctioned than because you were too slow in clearing it.



AN OPEN MIND

Experts never stop learning. It astonished me to learn that experts are more open to new ideas and less positive about their shooting techniques than many average shooters. Some of the most strident proponents of various shooting techniques—the Weaver stance, for example—are shooters who, by current standards, would be considered mediocre at best.

Experts are more likely to take the approach, "This is the technique I use now. These are the reasons I use it. If there's a better way, show me. If it is indeed better, I will change and use it."

Experts don't let ego or emotion lead them to defend outdated techniques when better methods come along.



The Difficult Way Up

Experts practice things that are difficult. Average shooters don't like to work on things that are difficult. They like to practice speed shooting, fast draws, things that are fun.

It's the same in any activity. Mediocre golfers spend their time on the driving range, blasting one full-power swing

after another, while the pros sweat it out in the bunker, working on sand shots.

Weak-hand shooting is hard. Long-range shooting is hard. Draws from concealment are hard. Improvement comes slowly, and results are never that impressive. But they are skills that can win matches. Or save your life.

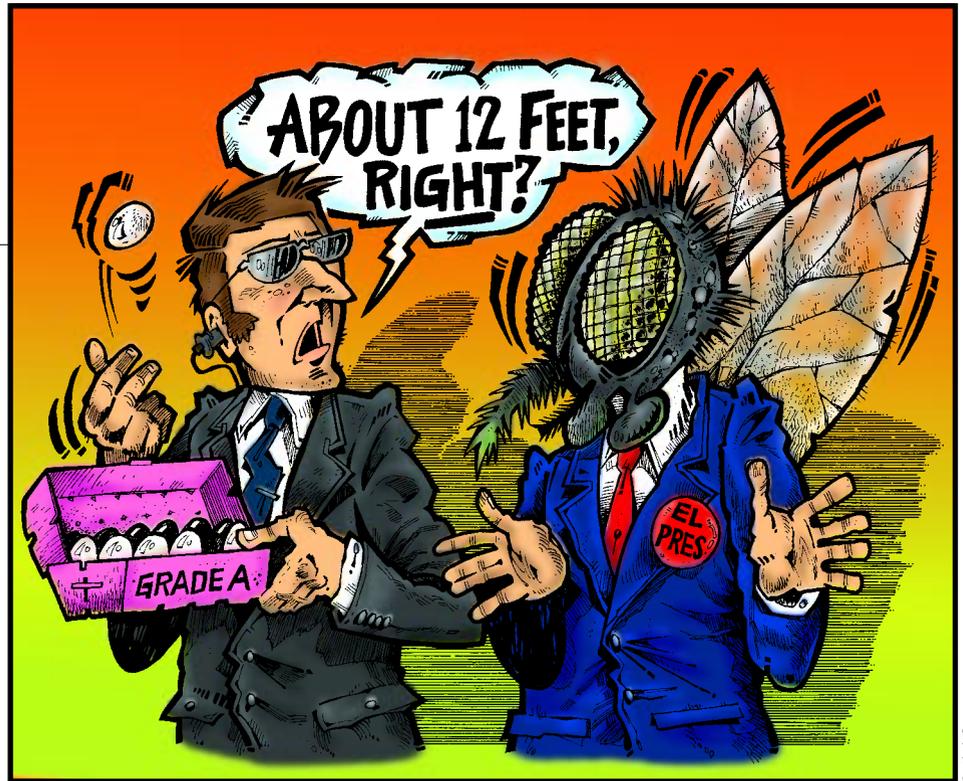


And Some Of Them Are Those Rotten, Nasty "Assault Eggs"

Brazil's presidential security detail is pretty much like the Secret Service protective unit at the White House— you know, loyal, well-armed, highly trained and ready to take a bullet for their protectee at any moment. In recent months, though, there hadn't been many incoming bullets, but lots and lots of incoming eggs.

Many of Brazil's top officials couldn't set foot outside anymore without getting pelted, and sometimes those eggs weren't very, you know, fresh. In fact, some of 'em had been so foul that concerns had been voiced about possibly poisoned or contaminated eggs. Then, Brazil's presidential security unit leaped into action.

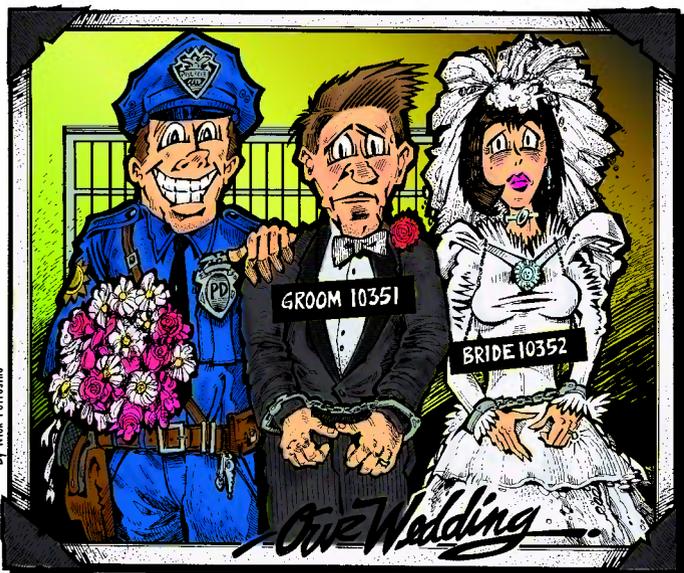
According to a highly placed source speaking to the newspaper *Folha de Sao Paulo*, several weeks of egg-chucking tests determined that a reasonably safe egg-denial distance is 150 to 180 feet, depending on prevailing winds, so that's the minimum distance the detail is going to keep President Cardoso from potentially hostile egg tossers.



By Nick Petrosino

Folha reported the tests showed, among other things, that a human head at 180 feet presents the same size target as a fly at 12 feet. Presumably, they determined that it's really, really hard to hit a fly with an egg at four meters. Or maybe they threw a lot of eggs at a guy 180 feet away.

GOOD MOTIVES, BUT POOR TECHNIQUES



By Nick Petrosino

Witnesses to the robbery of Chase Manhattan Bank in Brooklyn gave several suspect descriptions to the cops, with the usual crazy inconsistencies, but one thing they all agreed on was that the stickup crew seemed, you know, "amateurish," like they weren't real semi-pro crooks.

There was a good reason for that, as officers learned when they ran the shooters down: They were just a nice bride-and-groom combo trying to finance their nuptials.

Kevin Rainey, 41, and his bride-to-be, Dorrell Mainer, 38, had made extravagantly expensive plans for a huge wedding, banking on a fat refund from the IRS. That's stupid enough, but after the IRS told 'em to pound sand, the couple said they looked at their options and decided that robbing a bank was their best bet for covering the bills from the florist and the caterer.

They told the cops they just didn't want to disappoint their families, especially since some relatives were coming in from all over the country. We don't know how Auntie Flo and Uncle George felt about blowing in from Des Moines to find the happy couple in the federal lockup.



ELITE II FORCE

Beretta's upgraded version of the legendary M92, the Elite II, is the winningest gun in IDPA. It's go-to-hell-and-back reliable and as accurate as most target pistols. In case you haven't gathered, we like it. A lot.

**By Dave Anderson
Photos By Ichiro Nagata**

The Beretta Elite II in 9mm Luger is an accurate, reliable, attractive pistol based on the popular Beretta 92 series and incorporating a number of competition-proven features. Beretta's supervisor of law enforcement operations, Ernest Langdon, is a top-notch IDPA (International Defensive Pistol Association) competitor who has won major IDPA matches with a Beretta Elite II.

However, Langdon advised *American Handgunner* that Beretta's intent was not to build a pistol designed for competition. Rather, the idea was to use the lessons learned in competition to build a better defensive pistol.

The introduction of IDPA competition— and, to a far lesser extent, Production Class in IPSC— has had considerable impact in attracting new shooters to take up practical-shooting competi-

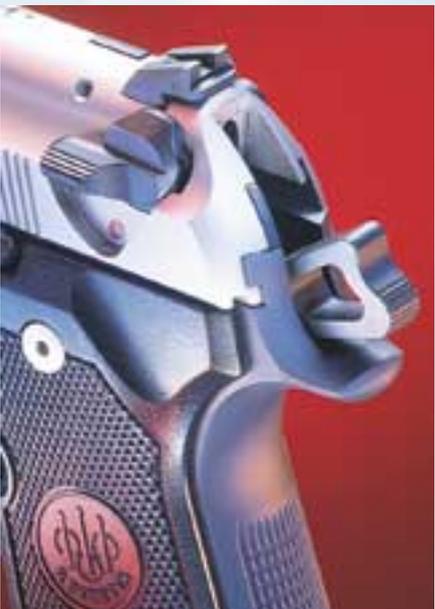
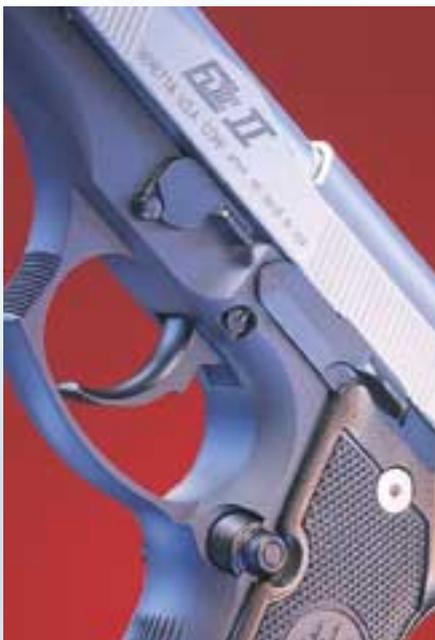
tion. These divisions are for factory-stock guns, with only very minor modifications allowed.

A “production class” levels the playing field. Factory-stock guns no longer have to compete against \$2,500 “Limited” guns with hand-fitted match barrels, tuned actions and 2 lb. triggers. Now, the police officer or private citizen can show up with a box-stock production pistol used for duty and personal defense, and compete with others similarly equipped. Shooting ability and sound tactics, not equipment, decide the winner.

Stock-gun competition has caught the interest of manufacturers as well as competitors. The Para-Ordnance Limited Model, the Glock 34 and 35 and the HK USP Expert all show the influence of competition, with features such as improved sights, triggers and operating controls.

Competition shooting should be the equivalent of what auto racing is for automobile manufacturers— an opportunity to pro-





mote their products and to find out what works under the intense pressure of racing. That's why the factories should support production-class shooting with sponsorships.

Extreme Duty

The basic Beretta 92 design has proven, through extensive testing and years of actual use, to be reliable, durable and accurate. It is the official service pistol of the United States armed forces. In one form or another, the 92— and its .40 S&W variation, the Model 96— is issued by many police departments. It's also a favorite with private citizens needing a high-quality, dependable pistol for personal and home defense.

The Elite II uses the heavier Brigadier-style slide, with extra steel in the locking lug area. The standard Beretta slide has proven amply strong, but some users, such as commercial firing ranges and competitive shooters, go well beyond heavy-duty use into what might be called "extreme duty." Where a typical duty gun might fire 500 rounds a year, many competitors shoot that much every week.

The original Elite had a blued steel slide and a stainless steel barrel. With the Elite II, both slide and barrel are stainless-steel. Its rakishly slanted front and rear cocking serrations and prominent "Elite II" logo make for a striking appearance.

Front and rear sights are blue steel, strongly mounted in dovetail cuts in the slide. The rear sight is the famous Novak. It is strong, neat and resistant to snagging. In conjunction with the serrated vertical post front-sight, the Novak rear provides an excellent sight picture.

Praise be, the proportions of rear-sight notch and front sight width are such that there is plenty of light around the front sight! Top competitors have shown conclusively that a narrow front sight provides adequate precision and



The locking block on the 92 has been redesigned to prevent the breakages that cropped up in the '80s on military Berettas.



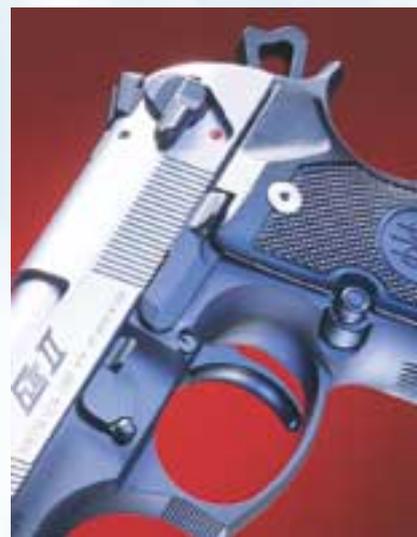
much greater speed.

Function is traditional double-action; the first shot is fired by one long pull, and subsequent shots are fired single-action. The Elite II ambidextrous slide levers function only to drop the hammer, after which they spring back to “fire” position. Beretta calls this their “G” configuration, evidently because it was designed at the request of the French police, or *gendarmérie*.

In its DA-only “D” series pistols, Beretta uses a lighter trigger-return spring that provides a lighter, smoother double-action pull than the standard 92. The Elite II is fitted with the 92D trigger spring. Compared to a 92D I had on hand, the Elite II double-action pull feels identical—smooth and with just a bit of

stacking at the end. Single-action pull measured a consistent 4.75 lbs., with considerable takeup followed by a reasonably clean release and minimal over-travel. It’s not in a class with a tuned 1911 trigger, but, as DA autos go, I would call it very good, certainly adequate for production-class competition.

There are other differences between the Elite II and a standard Beretta 92. The stainless steel barrel has a neatly recessed muzzle crown. Front and rear grip straps are checkered, rather than just vertically serrated. Grip panels are secured by stainless-steel, hex-head screws. The lanyard loop has been eliminated, and the magazine well has been beveled for easier mag changes. The two 10-round magazines supplied are fitted



Beretta ELITE II



- *Beretta Elite II pistol*
(301) 283-2191
- *Strider custom fighter*
(760) 471-8275
- *Bianchi Cobra Tactical holster*
(909) 676-5621



STIPPER

AMERICAN
HANDGUNNER



with thicker base pads. The hammer has been skeletonized for faster lock time.

Elite Shooting

Shooting the Elite II provided no surprises. I expected it to be accurate, reliable and easy to shoot. It was accurate, reliable and easy to shoot. Grip shape and angle felt very comfortable to this long-time 1911 user; operating controls were in the right positions and functioned properly.

The combination of the Beretta's comfortable grip frame, 35 oz. weight and 9mm Luger cartridge made for mild recoil, little muzzle flip and, hence, fast sight recovery.

Testing was done with a wide variety of ammunition from Winchester, Black Hills, Federal, Cor-Bon and Speer. Groups at 25 yards averaged 2" and were extremely consistent. There weren't any sub-1", one-hole groups, nor were there any groups over 3" or any flyers. It didn't seem to matter what brand or bullet weight. This level of accuracy seems typical of Beretta 92s.

There were no malfunctions of any kind. I would have been astonished if there had been. Even the most hide-bound 1911 fan—me, for example—would have to concede that the reliability of the Beretta 92 is unsurpassed.

A couple of pre-ban 15-shot Beretta magazines fit and functioned perfectly in the Elite II. All magazines dropped freely from the gun when the magazine button was depressed.



Although there are plenty of Beretta 92 high-cap magazines around, they aren't needed for IDPA competition, which mandates 10 rounds maximum in order to provide a level playing field. It's better to use the 10-shot magazines in competition to ensure you don't inadvertently load an extra round. However, I like the high-caps for practice, simply because they are easier to load. Getting the last couple of rounds in these mandated 10-rounders can be a painful experience.

The Elite II should prove highly successful in production-class competition. Even if match shooting doesn't interest you, the competition-proven features of the Elite II make it an excellent version of one of the world's great pistols. 



By John Taffin



Big Bore Redhawk

Chambered in .45 Colt, Ruger's rugged double-action opens new vistas of power for the handloader.



Over the years, the Ruger Redhawk has been offered in .357 Magnum and .41 Magnum, in addition to the standard .44 Magnum offering. The two former chamberings are now long gone, but the big .44 has been recently joined by the .45 Colt in stainless steel.

The Redhawk .44 Magnum is a very strong sixgun. Along with its brother, the Super Redhawk, they are the strongest double-actions ever offered to sixgunners. Since the .45 Colt is built on the same platform, it is by extension the sturdiest double-action .45 ever offered to shooters.

The .45 Redhawk is available in both the easy-packin' 5½" version, as well as in a 7½" model, both with and without the factory-scope option that consists of two scallops on the barrel to accept

Ruger's integral scope rings.

Let us back up a bit here and look at both the cartridge and the sixgun that are combined to give us the .45 Redhawk. The .45 Colt, often erroneously referred to as the .45 Long Colt, first saw the light of day chambered in the now legendary Colt Single Action Army, the fabled Peacemaker of 1873.

Being a blackpowder cartridge, the .45 Colt case is of large capacity, large enough to accept a full 40 grains of blackpowder under its 255 gr. conical, or flatnose, lead bullet. Muzzle velocities in the 1870s were probably somewhere around 850 to 950 fps.

Anyone acquainted with sixguns quickly notices that the cylinder walls on the Colt SAA are very thin. However, this was not a problem, as the blackpowder load was low-pressure.

When experimenters started stoking up the fire on the .45 to take advantage of its larger case capacity with smokeless powders, inevitable things happened. Cylinders burst, top straps blew, careers launched. Elmer Keith started his writing career in the 1920s describing a blow-up of a .45 Colt. That incident caused him to give up on the .45 Colt and adopt the .44 Special for the heavy loads he wanted to use.

Some said then— and they still do— that .45 Colt brass is weak. Perhaps it was in its old, original blackpowder form. Perhaps it still was at Keith's time, with folded, or balloon-head, cases. However, when Dick Casull started the experiments that led to the .454 Casull, he used the standard .45 brass available at the time. The balloon-head brass had given way to the modern solid-head

brass, and this is exactly what we have today. It's exactly what Casull used.

The missing strength factor in Casull's work was not the brass case, but the available sixguns. He blew several Colts, then started fitting five-shot cylinders and finally built his own custom sixguns to house 230 gr. bullets at 1,800 fps, all in standard .45 Colt brass.

It would be nearly 90 years after the advent of the Colt SAA before we would see a single-action strong enough to take advantage of the voluminous case capacity of the .45 Colt when using smokeless powder. That sixgun was Ruger's .45 Blackhawk. These sixguns are certainly not as strong as Casull's five-shooters, so it behooves us to approach loading for the .45 Blackhawk with a great deal of common sense.

Redhawk Appears

Ruger's Redhawk, which first appeared in 1980, offered a .44 Magnum at a price of \$325. The first example to arrive locally went for \$800! Why? Such was the state of affairs in trying to acquire a double-action .44 Magnum in the late 1970s that Smith & Wesson were often going for double the suggested retail price.

It is hard to say who sold more Smith & Wesson .44 Magnums over the years—Elmer Keith, with his writings, or Clint Eastwood, with his Dirty Harry portrayal.

We do know that Dirty Harry caused the immediate supply problem, as there were many more buyers of .44 sixguns than there were sixguns. Smith & Wesson worked around the clock, but could not keep up with the demand. It was only the arrival of the Redhawk that provided a safety valve that soon allowed everything to resume some form of normalcy.

Ruger not only had an advantage in bringing their double-action out at the right time, but they also built their gun around the cartridge, rather than chambering some existing model. This made it the strongest sixgun ever offered for the .44 Magnum.

Ruger engineers were able to do this without giving us an extra-heavy or clumsy sixgun. The only fault most of us can find with the Redhawk is the fact that it is difficult to get a really good trigger on Big Red.

Strong Revolver

The Redhawk gains its strength in many ways. The threaded area of the frame is very thick—double what one finds in many other sixguns—and the massive cylinder is locked at the rear and front rather than at the end of the ejector rod. The barrel carries a heavy rib, and the top strap literally speaks of brute strength. Like the single-action Blackhawk, the Redhawk just keeps going. And going. And going.

For testing the .45 Colt in the Redhawk, I ordered a scope-ready 7½" version,

Continued on page 99



.45 Colt Loads In Ruger's Redhawk

Load	Group	Velocity (7.5")	Velocity (5.5")
Buffalo Bore 300 gr. Speer	3/4"	1,367 fps	1,327 fps
Buffalo Bore 325 gr. LBT	3/4"	1,392 fps	1,339 fps
Cor-Bon 265 gr. BC +P	1"	1,347 fps	1,336 fps
Cor-Bon 300 gr. BC +P	1 1/8"	1,271 fps	1,252 fps
4-W 328 gr. LBT +P	1 1/4"	1,338 fps	1,292 fps
Hornady 250 gr. XTP/20.0 grs. #2400	7/8"	1,137 fps	1,080 fps
Hornady 300 gr. XTP/21.2 grs. H110	1"	1,064 fps	958 fps
BRP 300 gr. GC/21.5 grs. WW296	7/8"	1,240 fps	1,208 fps
Swift 265 gr. JHP/26.0 grs. WW296	1 1/4"	1,415 fps	1,371 fps
LBT 260 gr. KT/10.0 grs. Unique	3/4"	1,059 fps	1,043 fps
LBT 260 gr. KT/21.0 grs. #2400	1 1/8"	1,294 fps	1,280 fps
CPBC 265 gr. LBT/26.0 grs. WW296	1"	1,464 fps	1,380 fps
CPBC 325 gr. LBT/21.0 grs. WW296	1"	1,234 fps	1,205 fps
CPBC 335 gr. LBT/21.0 grs. WW296	1 1/8"	1,275 fps	1,201 fps
CPBC 360 gr. LBT/19.5 grs. WW296	1 1/4"	1,180 fps	1,154 fps
Lyman 454424/18.5 grs. #2400	1 1/4"	1,093 fps	1,056 fps
Lyman 452490GC/23.0 grs. 4227	1 1/8"	1,165 fps	1,148 fps
Lyman #452490GC/20.0 grs. #2400	7/8"	1,306 fps	1,226 fps
Lyman #457191/18.5 grs. #2400	1 1/8"	1,108 fps	1,095 fps
NEI 310KT/21.2 grs. H110	1 1/8"	1,217 fps	1,143 fps
NEI 325KT/21.2 grs. H110	1 1/4"	1,208 fps	1,152 fps
Sierra 240 gr. JHP/24.0 grs. H4227	7/8"	1,058 fps	not tested
Sierra 240 gr. JHP/25.0 grs. WW296	1 1/8"	1,250 fps	not tested
Sierra 240 gr. JHP/26.0 grs. WW296	7/8"	1,301 fps	not tested
Hornady 250 gr. JHP/24.0 grs. H4227	1 1/2"	1,087 fps	not tested
Hornady 250 gr. JHP/26.0 grs. WW296	1 1/2"	1,292 fps	not tested
Hornady 250 gr. XTP/26.0 grs. H110	1 1/8"	1,364 fps	not tested
Speer 260 gr. JHP/24.0 grs. H4227	3/4"	1,124 fps	not tested



Eagle developed a unique “faux ivory” product they call Ultra Ivory. It has the color, texture and grain of elephant ivory, but, much to the dismay of PETA members, dispenses with the need for sanctimonious hand-wringing.



Two best-sellers out of the Eagle lineup are the Gun-fighter for single-actions and the Classic for most double-action revolvers. These are made of rosewood, an Eagle specialty. (Vintage five-screw N-frame not included.)

Eagle Grips

Customize Your Revolver Or Pistol With Stag, Ebony, Ivory, Rosewood Or Other Exotic Material From This Illinois Gripmaker.

By Charles E. Petty

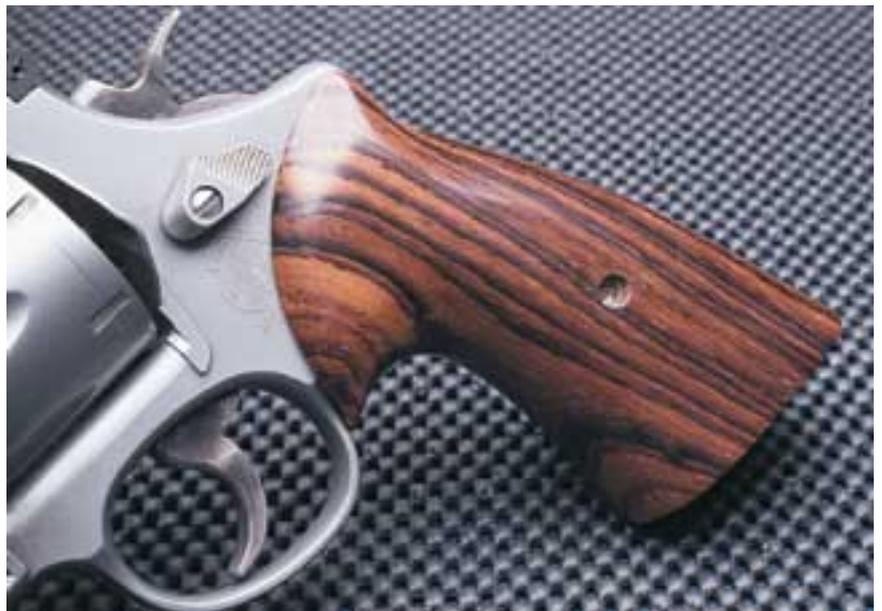


Changing grips is the most common form of handgun customizing because anyone can do it. Most of the time, a screwdriver is all you need to change the grips and put your own personal touch on a gun. Most often, grips are changed to make a gun look or feel better.

Almost since there have been handguns there have been people who made special grips for them. Like so many other things, grips are usually the proof of the "get what you pay for" adage. There are some outrageously expensive grips and some reasonably-priced bargains too. Eagle Grips of Illinois has both good quality and affordable pricing.

The story begins in 1971 when founder Harbans Singh discovered that there was a considerable demand for ivory grips. He had come to the U.S. from India in 1958 as an hydraulic engineer and in '71 was working for the state of Illinois. But he also knew that India had sizeable supplies of ivory and a centuries-old tradition of craftsmen to work it.

On his visits home, he would bring ivory grips back for friends and it grew from there. Some of those originals are treasures now. Today, of course, ivory is



A standard K-frame rosewood grip, just like your gunshop should have in stock. Note: color and grain may vary on individual sets, pending the completion of Eagle's new Rosewood Clone Forest.



The Secret Service grip, shown here in, you guessed it, rosewood, fits the J-frame S&W as well as other small-frame revolvers. The design fills in the void between the back of the trigger guard and the grip frame.



A gripsmith in Eagle's Illinois facility demonstrates how to polish with the latest in OSHA-approved ventilation equipment.



Here the gripsmith utilizes the time-honored method of "smoking" the grip frame with chalk dust to mate a grip precisely. Either that or we muddled this up with a photo from the Cali School Of Gunsmithing.

hard to find and almost prohibitively expensive.

As the demand for his grips increased, gripmaking became a full time business. New materials came into play, such as rosewood, which today is the backbone of Eagle Grips. The company also specializes in stag, ebony, buffalo horn, mother of pearl and a synthetic ivory product that is as close as it gets to the real stuff.

Many shooters think ivory is the ultimate dressing for a fine gun, but the cost is often prohibitive. Eagle's new "Ultra Ivory" is a synthetic material with the grain and texture of real ivory. Ultra Ivory is imported in blocks and carved from a solid chunk just like real ivory. Ultra Ivory grips are neither molded nor cast.

The grain structure of real ivory is fascinating, seeming to change with every tiny difference in the light. Ultra Ivory has just a hint of that. In fact, it would probably take a side-by-side comparison to tell it apart from genuine ivory.

Although available as a standard replacement for many models, Ultra Ivory is most popular with single-action Colts and Rugers. You can send your gun to Eagle to have a set precisely fitted, for an extra charge, or you can buy Ultra Ivory off-the-shelf. This stuff is truly remarkable.

Bigger Is Better

"Eagle Grips has grown to become the largest manufacturer of hand-crafted handgun grips," says Raj Singh, company president and son of the founder. The company has facilities in India and the Philippines, as well as the Land Of Lincoln. Over the years I've hung more than a few pairs of his grips on my guns, always with great success.

I asked Singh to tell me the number of various makes and models for which Eagle manufactures grips. "It would be easier to ask what we don't make," he chuckled and proceeded to name the few oddball guns for which they don't make a grip. If it's a modern revolver or pistol, they've probably got it in stock—and in several different materials.

Eagle Grips has over 50 different styles for the 1911 alone! If they don't have it in stock they can probably make it using an inventory of hundreds of frames and templates.

By almost any standard Eagle is a small business. They have fewer than 100 employees and their manufacturing is efficient and flexible. Most grips are imported completely finished and ready to go, but some arrive semi-finished to be completed at their Carol Stream, Ill. shop. It is here that the true custom grips are made as well. While frames do vary slightly in dimensions, especially old Colt frames, the vast majority of Eagle's production grips are so precisely made that they fit like gloves.

Favorite Grip

If I were forced to choose a single



Somehow a rosewood grip on a SIG P-220 makes us think of chrome wheels on a Hummer.

style of grip as my favorite it would have to be Eagle's "Secret Service" style. I tried my first pair several years ago on a Chief's Special, but the Secret Service grips really came into prominence when S&W introduced the Airlite Ti snubnose. The first thing I did was replace the factory grips with rosewood Secret Service grips. This turned my Model 332 into the ultimate pocket pistol.

The grips are thin and do not increase the grip length at all. Rubber grips are nice for shooting, but they adhere to clothing and make it very difficult to simply slip the gun in a pocket. The Secret Service is very hand-friendly; even with hot ammo, the shape helps with recoil control.

Not only does Eagle sell grips to dealers and the public but also they are a significant Original Equipment Manufacturer for companies who need special grips. The best example is probably Colt; the majority of Colt's SAA pistols with high grade features wear grips from Eagle.

Until now, Eagle has been a pretty well kept secret. At the recent NRA Convention a buddy rushed up to me and said, "You gotta go see those Eagle grips. They're really nice." I smiled as I patted my Eagle-stocked Centennial in my pocket. I agreed.



For more information, contact Eagle Grips, 460 Randy Rd., Carol Stream, IL 60188; phone: (800) 323-6144; website: www.eaglegrips.com



Narrow at the top, wide at the bottom- that's the basic principle for double-action revolver grips. Somehow S&W never quite caught on to this concept, manufacturing millions of "Magna" grips that are wide at the top. We wonder: did Daniel Wesson secretly invest in thousands of acres of Goncalo Alves?



Ultra Ivory and a Colt single-action revolver, for the man who has everything.

Selecting Home Defense Ammunition

By Massad Ayoob

Something is in your nest with your mate and your cubs. It's a carnivorous predator, and it has intruded with harmful intent. Instinct tells you what to do. Destroy the invader! But that same instinct screams an equally imperative order: do not harm the very ones we must protect!

This is the cornerstone of survival instinct in all mammals, *Homo sapiens* included. It is also pretty much the "prime directive" in home defense planning for the worst-case scenario. The dwelling has been breached by violent, lawless intruders capable of killing or maiming, and the situation has digressed to what used to be put in simple terms: "Kill or be killed."

We have guns. We have intent. Now let's talk about the ammunition. The great small arms authority Col. Jeff Cooper made the point that firearms are secondary, because they are the launchers, and ammunition is primary, because that's what delivers the necessary effect on the receiving end.

For us to be warranted in employing a lethal weapon on another human being, that other person must be doing something so horrible that law, morality and logic alike demand that he must be stopped as instantaneously as possible. The object is not to kill, but to stop.

If the stopping causes death, it is a sad but acceptable consequence of the life-threatening emergency he himself created. In violating innocent people's right to live, he surrenders his own.

Backstop Rule

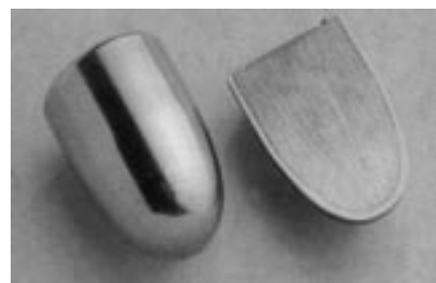
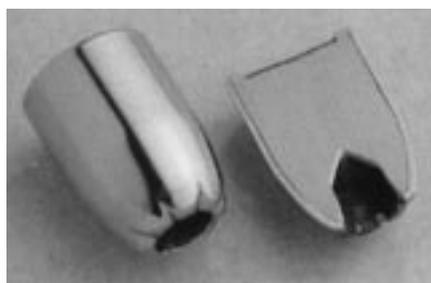
But concomitantly, we must make certain that our exertion of this potentially fatal force does not unnecessarily

endanger the lives of others in the home. In marksmanship, it is known as "the rule of the backstop." Do not fire a gun unless you are reasonably and prudently certain the bullet will stop in a place that will not endanger innocent life.

Let us pause and analyze what this means.

On a firing range, the backstop is the steel banking or the earthen berm behind the targets that catches projectiles. In the game fields, the backstop is the ground or the heavy vegetation behind the animal. On the battlefield, the backstop is the enemy soldier charging behind the one you're aiming at. Cool: two-for-one.

It is extremely rare for a defensive



Hollow cavity projectiles can fill with sheetrock and behave like FMJ bullets (right).

Average Penetration In Ballistic Gelatin

	No Impediment	Sheet Rock Barrier
.40 S&W 180 gr. JHP	14.2"	25.2"
.223 Rem. 55 gr. FMJ	14.3"	11.5"
12 gauge 00 buckshot	22.8"	23.2"
12 gauge 1 oz. slug	21.0"	23.4"

shooting to take place where there is a natural backstop, let alone a berm. It happens occasionally, though: a traffic stop gone bad or a murder attempt out in the middle of nowhere. The occasional shooting in cities where there's nothing but sheer, heavy concrete wall or brick behind the perpetrator. But, those too are rare.

We are talking home defense here. I've been to places like rural South Africa where homes are built with massive, heavy walls not only on the outside, but between the rooms on the inside. The descendants of the vooi trekkers have spent well over a century defending their remote homes from all manner of besiegers, and they have incorporated this experience into their architecture.

Home In The USA

However, in the United States, our homes, whether houses or apartments, simply aren't built like that. We're talking 2x4s and sheet rock. This stuff doesn't stop any but the most frangible bullet. In fact, it tends to plug hollowpoint pistol bullets and make them penetrate even deeper into whatever flesh they strike once they emerge on the other side.

Analyzing a ballistics issue that examined penetration and potential over-penetration, Larry Nichols, the rangemaster for the Burbank, Calif., Police Department, wrote the following:

"Penetration tests conducted by department range staff and several other highly respected experts have resulted in the following conclusions (see accompanying chart for numbers):

"The first thing you notice is the startling over-penetration of the typical jacketed hollowpoint pistol bullet once its nose is packed with an inert substance. The second thing you notice is that the over-penetration effect of .223 rifle ammo may have been highly over-rated. This validates the recommendation of Thunder Ranch director Clint Smith, who prefers and recommends a short .223 caliber AR-15 rifle as a home defense weapon.

"However, one conclusion we can't escape is this: all these rounds are going to go through walls with more than enough power to kill any human being they encounter on the other side."

This means that a backstop is needed. And there is only one backstop you can count on in this situation. It is the body of the violent attacker.

Body As Backstop

One of the respected experts cited in the Burbank study was Dr. Gary Roberts. Dr. Roberts wrote an article titled *Law Enforcement General Purpose Shoulder Fired Weapons: The Wounding Effects of 5.56mm Carbines Compared with 12 ga. Shotguns and Pistol Caliber*



Weapons Using 10% Ordnance Gelatin as a Tissue Simulant. It appeared in the July/August 1998 issue of the respected law enforcement professional journal, *Police Marksman*.

He found that in bare gelatin, a Winchester 230 gr. SXT hollowpoint from a 5" Colt Government Model pistol would penetrate an average of 14.2", mushroom to an average diameter of .71", and lose an average of only 2.3 grains of weight by the time it had come to rest.

Remington 12 gauge 00 buckshot sent each of its .32 caliber spheres an average of 22.8" into the test medium, each apparently coming to rest intact. The test weapon was a Remington 870 pump shotgun with an 18" barrel and cylinder bore.

A 16" barrel AR-15A2 Colt Sporter with 1:7 rifling twist was used to fire the .223 rounds in the Roberts test. Federal's high-speed 40 gr. hollowpoint, sometimes known as the "Blitz" round, penetrated only 6.7" into the gelatin, with approximately 87 percent fragmentation. Winchester's 53 gr. hollowpoint .223 went only 8.0", with 72.5 percent disintegration. All delivered massive cavitation.

None of these .223 bullets are likely to exit the body of an average size male on a frontal torso shot. All are likely to cause tremendous damage of the kind that stops lethal assaults instantly.

The swift ending of the lethal assault brings safety. The bullet staying inside the body of the lethal offender brings safety. The key in both cases is only partially the effect of the projectile. First and foremost is placing the projectile into the center of the opponent's body.

Strategy Factor

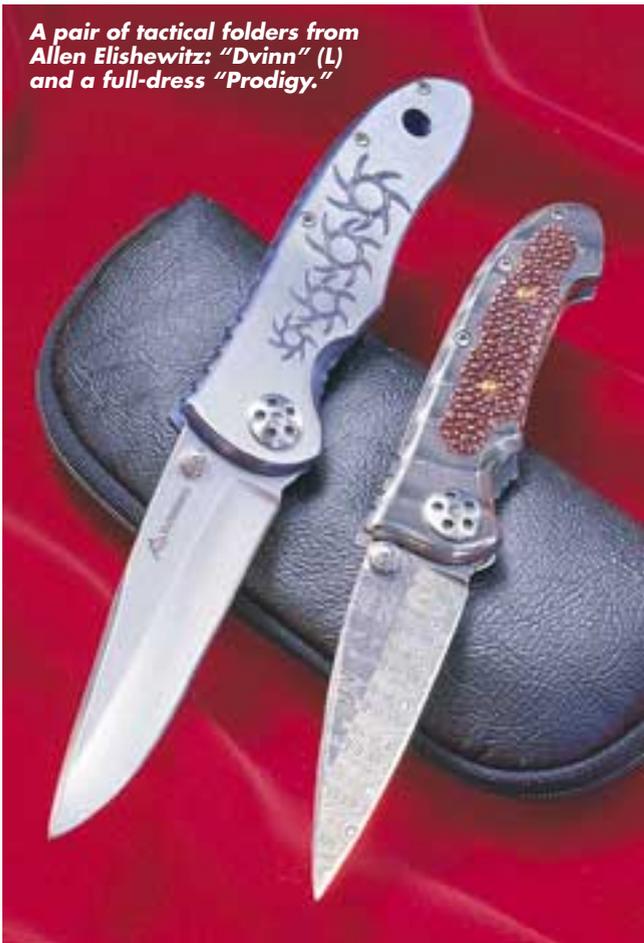
Evaluate your home like a general selecting a battleground. Figure out where you're most likely to confront an assailant. Where is there likely to be a backstop?

Continued on page 97



The author recommends stacks of books (top right) or a filing cabinet, such as these Ayoob files, to serve as backstops within the home.

A pair of tactical folders from Allen Elishewitz: "Dvinn" (L) and a full-dress "Prodigy."



Bob Terzuola's designs are clean like his ATCF model shown plain and full-dress.

PURVEYOR

BY PAT COVERT
PHOTOS BY ICHIRO NAGATA

PERFECTION



Pat and Wes Crawford made this full-dress version of their "Janus."

Tactical work is a team effort, and no one knows this more than Jay and Karen Sadow of Arizona Custom Knives (AZCK). This husband-wife duo has been a silent force behind the tactical folder market even before the genre came into its own. Indeed, AZCK has probably sold more custom-made tactical folders than any other retailer.

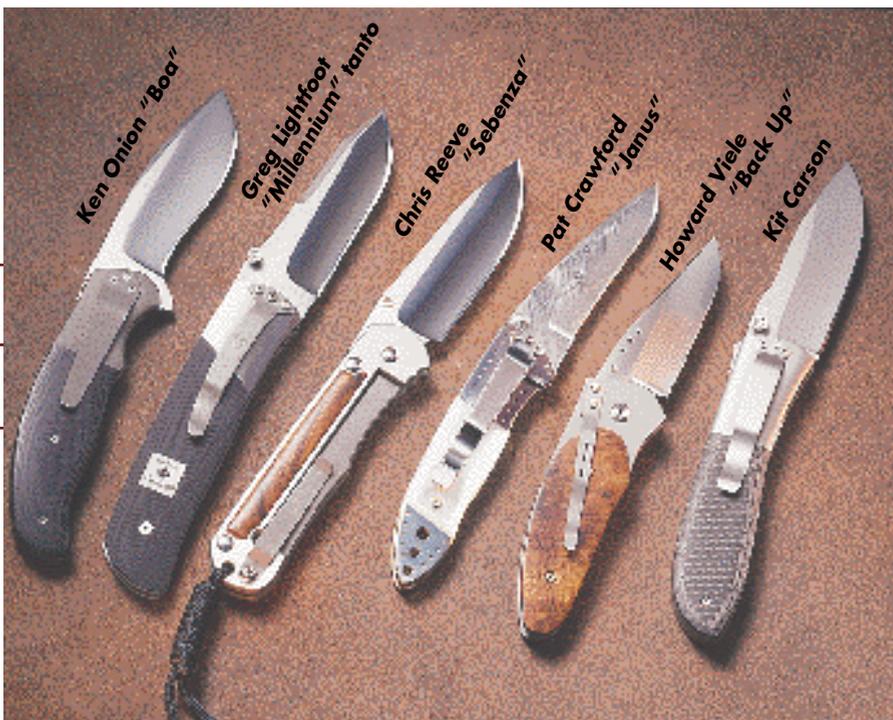
AZCK started innocently enough. As a kid in the early '60s, Jay developed an interest in knives while watching his childhood heroes, like Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone and Jim Bowie, on television. He still owns his dad's old pocket knife, the one he broke trying to throw it into a tree. By the time Jay reached high school, he'd amassed a handsome

knife collection, one he shared openly in class from time to time. It was okay to do that back then.

Little did Jay suspect that his collection would be a harbinger of things to come. Two decades later, Jay is married to Karen, living in Phoenix, with two kids in the equation. He convinces Karen to accompany him to a large gun and knife show. It was there that the couple was first exposed to custom knives and, through a bit of persuasion on Jay's part, they left the show with his first custom knives in hand.

With a family to support, Jay eventually realized that he'd need to sell a few knives to feed his new interest in custom cutlery. In 1992, the couple founded Arizona Custom Knives and spent \$89 on an ad, the sum total of their annual advertising budget for the year. It must

A pair of "Tighe Pan" models from Brian Tighe.



have worked. Today, the company has a five-figure ad budget and sells a heck of a lot of knives!

One of the keys to the Sadows' success is that they have cultivated strong relationships with the top knifemakers over the years. The makers know them, trust them and, as a consequence, keep them supplied with a nice flow of their wares, which in turns keeps their customers happy.

"The explosive growth of our business during the '90s took us by surprise and was very exciting, but it's the relationships we've forged over that time that really define who we are today. From the gratitude shown by the makers who we represent to the satisfied thank-you's we get from the many loyal collectors we serve around the world, those are the things that make this meaningful," Jay explained.

Online Knives

AZCK sells knives through a monthly catalog and through their website. Their selection of custom offerings is extensive in virtually all categories of knives. From art knives to daily users, from Bowies to tacticals, AZCK keeps a steady flow of custom bladeware coursing in and out of its doors.

One of their specialties is tactical knives. You'd have to search far and wide to find a broader selection of the top knifemakers' works. AZCK offers both fixed blade and folding tacticals, and these range from base level, all-purpose user knives to high-end customs featuring exotic damascus steel blades with handle materials of pearl, fossil mammoth ivory and brightly colored titanium.

Because of their established relationship with the custom makers, the

Sadows can buy at dealer prices and extend their customers the same price the custom makers would charge. The benefit is that AZCK has the knives in stock, ready to ship now, allowing customers to bypass the lengthy waiting list of custom makers.

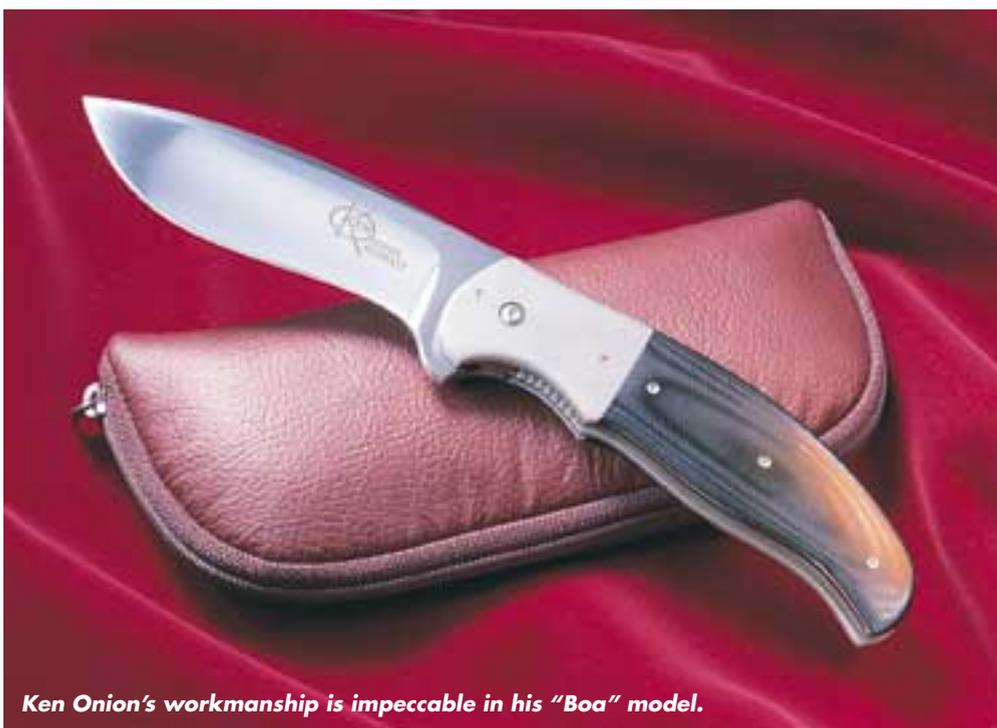
A quick glance at AZCK's latest catalog or website is enough to whet the appetite of any tactical knife aficionado. The list reads like a who's who of tactical makers. Allen Elishewitz? Check. Bob Terzuola? Roger. Brian Tighe? Ten-four. Greg Lightfoot,

Ken Onion, Pat and Wes Crawford, Kit Carson— yep, the gang's all here.

For those not familiar with these names, here is a brief bio of a sampling of the makers on AZCK's list, many of which have graced the pages of *American Handgunner* in issues past:

Kit Carson: Don't let the name fool you— Kit is as modern as they get when it comes to designing cutting-edge tacticals. This knifemaker has the production knife companies beating down his door constantly, so it's advisable to pick up one of his customs whenever you get a chance.

Continued on page 95



Ken Onion's workmanship is impeccable in his "Boa" model.



IPSC

2000

**A MATCH REPORT
ON THE GUNS AND
GEAR OF PRACTICAL
SHOOTING'S LIMITED
AND OPEN NATIONAL
CHAMPIONSHIPS.**

American practical pistol shooting has been dominated in recent years by three men: Todd Jarrett, Jerry Barnhart and Rob Leatham. In the last six years, from 1995 to 2001, no name other than Jarrett, Barnhart or Leatham occurs in the list of national champions of 12 consecutive Open and Limited USPSA National matches.

No doubt there are other great shooters and new blood is always welcome, but the triple team of Jerry-Rob-Todd dominated the last dozen nationals like no other trio in IPSC history. When they didn't win a

big USPSA Area match, it often meant none of the triumvirate was present.

The practical shooting year of 2000 was a banner one indeed. Not only did we have two nationals as usual, but also the U.S. Region of IPSC hosted Smith & Wesson's Millennium 2000 match, run concurrently with USPSA's Area 5 championship, and a Pan-Am continental championship later in the year.

Recent years of drifting apart between USPSA and IPSC leadership meant few U.S. matches had asked for official IPSC sanction. Here was a match that really made the most of the international con-

Story and Photos
By Nyle Leatham





nection inherent to the game from its founding at the Columbia Conference in Missouri in 1976. The S&W Millennium Match was run mainly under current IPSC rules, modified a bit to accommodate USPSA legal issues of liability.

The match went off in great fashion. It managed a tightrope balance between conflicting USPSA and IPSC rules. You could shoot all 22 stages as the Millennium or just stages 5 through 17, comprising the Area 5 Championship. Jarrett with his C-More sighted Para-Ordnance won Open class in both the Millennium 2000 and Area 5. Leatham won the Limited class, similar to IPSC Standard class, with his iron-sighted Springfield Armory "Hi-Cap" pistol in .40 S&W. With short 17 round pre-ban magazines, his pistol fit into the IPSC box as required.

Limited 2000

Then came the USPSA Limited 2000 match, held in the Pennsylvania mountain country near Pittsburgh. It was a new undertaking for a brave shooting club with a predominantly bow-hunter membership accommodating the needs of its few pistol shooters.

The triumvirate was there, of course. Jerry-Rob-Todd have all heard themselves called "shooting legends," but fame rests lightly in the practical shooting game. Jerry-Rob-Todd have come to be easy friends, sharing a great time in their avocation and profession. They mix casually with all comers. They are approachable by fellow shooters and spectators alike on the ranges.

Leatham won the match with the same Springfield Armory "Hi-Cap" .40 S&W pistol that he shot in the Millennium, this time under straight USPSA rules with no IPSC box worries. This meant that he could use 21-round competition magazines.

In a microcosm of the seesaw closeness to their rivalry, the final tally was

Leatham winning with 1436.1352 match points, Barnhart second with 1416.2383 match points (98.615 percent) and Jarrett third with 1402.4622 (97.655 percent).

The Pan-Am Open

The final big match of the year was also a combo— the Pan-American IPSC Championship combined with the USPSA Open Nationals. Once again, the blending of an IPSC match with USPSA "homegrown" rules came off smoothly with little fuss. Americans were to be reminded of the camaraderie of international shooting with its global bonds among shooters surmounting barriers of geography, culture, economics, language and politics.

The match was held at PASA Park, the site of the Smith & Wesson Millennium 2000 and Area 5. The range just gets better every year. The upper chronograph building is now completed and in use. Concrete walls neatly divide larger bays into smaller ones to accommodate the 24 stages of the Pan Am Open.

Although it was the USPSA annual Open championship, there was also a contest for Limited class or, more accurately, IPSC Standard class entrants for scoring in the Pan Am portion of the event. Again an American, Matt Burkett of Arizona, won with an SVI Infinity Competition model in .40 S&W carried in a Ghost holster.

An odd dimension was added to the match when defending champion Barnhart showed up with an iron-sighted Open class gun. He was the first shooter to win a nationals, in 1990, with a dot-sighted pistol and pushed the trend toward optics on IPSC raceguns.

Barnhart says he doesn't rely much on brand names these days and, when asked, said the pistol he chose to shoot is a "generic" 1911. Barnhart told puzzled fans, "I just really like the feel and handling of this gun set up this way. I don't owe anybody anything and it looked like



GUNS & GEAR OF THE CHAMPIONS

Shooter	Class	Gun	Caliber	Bullet	Powder	Barrel	Gunsmith(s)	Sight	Holster
Jerry Barnhart	Limited	STI	.40 S&W	180 gr.	Viht 320	Wilson	D. Cook, D. Jones	Bo-Mar	Bianchi
Matt Burkett	Standard	SVI	.40 S&W	Sinterfire 150 gr.	Viht 320	Shueman	SVI factory	Bo-Mar	Ghost
Rob Leatham	Limited	Springfield	.40 S&W	Nosler 180 gr.	Viht 320	Dawson	Dave Williams	Bo-Mar	Safariland
Todd Jarrett	Limited	Para-Ord.	.40 S&W	Hornady 180 gr.	Clays	Jarvis	Dave Dawson	Bo-Mar	Safariland
Jerry Barnhart	Open	STI	.38 Super Comp	115 gr.	IMR 7625	Hart	Doug Jones	Bo-Mar	Bianchi
Rob Leatham	Open	Springfield	9mm Super Comp	Nosler 135 gr.	Viht 340	Nowlin	Dave Williams	Aimpoint	Safariland
Todd Jarrett	Open	Para-Ord.	.38 TJ	Hornady 121 gr.	IMR 4756	Jarvis	Dave Dawson	C-More	Safariland

Rob Leatham proved his winning form once again with iron sights.



More and more start positions mandate "gun on table," making the draw less important in a match.





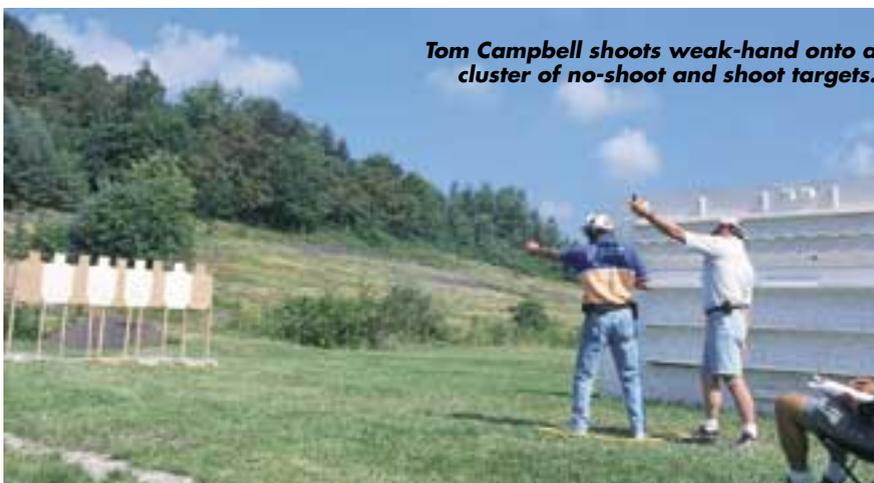
the fun way to shoot this particular match, just like in the old days.”

When pressed, he revealed these details about his gun— it is made by STI in the smooth-running .38 Super Comp caliber, using Starline brass, IMR 7625 powder and 115 gr. jacketed bullets. His barrel was by Kart and his retro sights were— what else?— BoMar.

Todd said what others were thinking, “Jerry, I know you came to win, but you are making a big mistake with those open sights at this match.” And by the end of the first day, seeing more long shots than usual in international-style stages, the Burner knew he had done exactly that.

Barnhart summed it up, “By mid-match, every time the gun came up I was asking, ‘Where’s the dot?’” Still, the Burner was awesome in the short-range, quick-acquisition stages. His brilliant shooting almost pulled off the overall win. It was one more example of skill counting more than hardware and a lot of folks were cheering for him to pull it off. As it was, fourth place was awesome.

At the end of the day, Todd won with his dot-sighted Para-Ordnance. It was a great year for practical shooting, and an even better one for the three-headed shooting monster, Jerry-Rob-Todd.



Tom Campbell shoots weak-hand onto a cluster of no-shoot and shoot targets.





PISTOLSMITH PROFILE

Dane Burns: Practical Guns For Serious Users

By Mark Twight

Dane Burns was a brash young man. In 1981 he climbed the north face of Mount Edith Cavell in the Canadian Rockies. Alone. Without ropes and an anorexic margin of safety, Burns dashed up the 4,000 foot wall in less than six hours. Three of North America's best climbers spent *two days* making the first ascent of this same route 20 years previously. A false move away from death the entire time, Burns determined, "The climbing wasn't that hard."

Dane has another passion: shooting. He began building pistols for IPSC competition in 1983. Burns relates, "It was hard to get a functional gun from anyone then. Some of the older gunsmiths had no idea what we were actually doing, or what kind of reliability was necessary in the new sport. It was like climbing gear in those days— stock equipment had to be modified if hard routes were going to be done."

A sheriff's department contract and local IPSC competitors kept him busy building guns, but being a full-time pistolsmith and shooter wasn't paying the bills. Sick of being poor, Burns handed off much of his customer base to Mark Morris (later of Morris Custom) and returned to school to finish his degree.

University tuition broke the bank further. Dane turned to warrant service as an "easy" way to pay the bills and spent the next seven years arresting bad guys. With over 2,000 arrests and a couple of shrewd overseas business investments to his credit, he began tinkering with pistols again.

By now he'd seen the gun from another angle. Competition guns were one thing,

but fighting guns were entirely different. "I abused my work guns. I dropped them. I clubbed bad guys in the head with them. So I wasn't into all the bells and whistles. Pistols are tools to me. Of course, I like nice looking tools. But a five foot drop to the cement shouldn't wreck one."

Dane picked up many of Morris Custom's back-logged customers who were not willing to wait, and was back building guns full-time. Burns shoots at a master level in IPSC competition using carry guns and gear. He was Washington State IDPA Enhanced Service Pistol cham-

panion in 1997 and CDP champion in 1998.

Burns shoots what he builds, and carries what he shoots, combining his competitive and tactical experience into his pistolsmithing philosophy. While he builds a higher proportion of 1911s in .45 ACP, he is perhaps best known as a proselyte of the 9x23 cartridge.

"It's simple. The 9x23 in the Winchester case is the *best* round for the 1911 platform guns ever designed!" he says flatly.

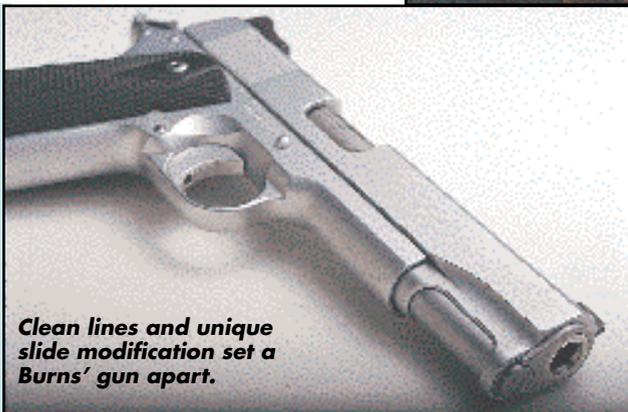
The current iteration of the cartridge was developed and patented by John Ricco and later "purchased" from him by Winchester. Development work had been done on a 9mm Magnum cartridge as early as the turn of the last century. Interest was rekindled in the early '70s when Jeff Cooper loaded chopped .223 brass to major power factors, safely pushing a 124 gr. bullet to 1,700 fps. Cooper said, "One would be well advised to stand out of its way." Today's factory Winchester 124 gr Silvertips do 1,450 fps, matching the best fight-stopping cartridge, the .357 Magnum. Burns says, "None of the excessive flash, muzzle blast or recoil common to the .357 revolver are present in a 1911 in 9x23. The guns are 11-shot .357s with the handling characteristics and reliability of John Browning's 1911."

The 9x23 case feeds better than any other in the 1911 frame. When stripped from the magazine, a cartridge hits the frame ramp, skips over the barrel feed ramp and into the chamber. The shorter the distance from the centerline of a cartridge in the magazine to the centerline of the bore, the easier the case feeds.

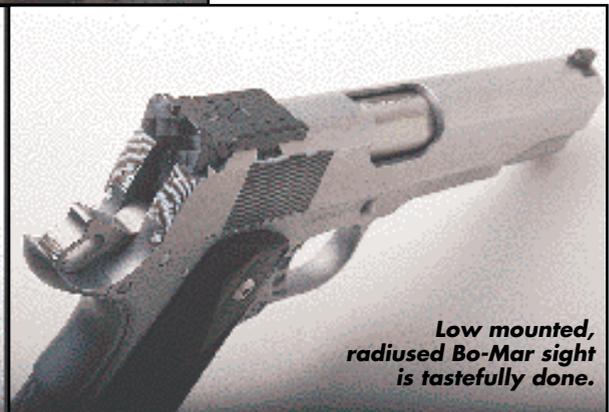


Burns at work in his shop.

Continued on page 89



Clean lines and unique slide modification set a Burns' gun apart.



Low mounted, radiused Bo-Mar sight is tastefully done.

GUN RIGHTS

Continued from page 27

Let's return to the segregation example. Not only would we deny that the "psychological burdens" suffered by whites due to the presence of African-Americans in their communities provide any basis for zoning laws establishing where people could live, but we would *condemn* those feelings as inappropriate and morally wrong.

This condemnation would occur even if whites argued that their feelings had a solid basis in reality. For example, it would not serve to argue that whites were fully justified in feeling this way because, statistically speaking, African-Americans committed a disproportionate amount of the crime in America.

Even if true, even if there were real, factual support for the feelings or beliefs of the whites, their feelings would still be condemned as improper bases for law because—both ethically and constitutionally—the requirement is to treat each individual as an individual, and to recognize and respect the inherent dignity of each individual.

Far from simply accepting the feelings of whites, whites would be subjected to demands that they *reform* so that they would no longer harbor racist feelings. And, if they could not reform their feelings, it would nonetheless be insisted that they keep those feelings to themselves, that they not *act* on that basis toward their fellow man.

Thus it would seem from our example that our *sentiments* are not the most reliable means of perceiving reality; that they may not have any justifiable correlation to reality; and that they may be treacherous, dangerous and unethical means of dealing with our fellow man.

This realization seemingly eludes the authors of the *Epidemiology* article. The good journal does not trouble itself with any inquiry into whether the feelings have any foundation in reality, or whether they rest on mistaken facts, impressions and judgments of those who harbor them. It simply accepts them, unquestioned, as is, and suggests that they ought to be taken into account in fashioning laws.

Nor is there any sense that sentiments must be disciplined and controlled by ethical requirements in dealing with our fellow man, any question whether those who have these feelings have a right to insist that others' behavior conform to their demands in order to alleviate their troubled minds.

Touchy-Feely Rights

Of course, that's the point, isn't it? People's feelings are what they are, regardless of what the facts are, regardless of whether any rights are involved. By casting the argument for gun control as one in which due recognition must be given to people's feelings, it becomes

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irrelevant what the real facts are, whether guns are used for more good than harm, whether the Second Amendment does or does not affirm an individual right to own and carry arms.

We sidestep all of that. By focusing on feelings, we take perception as reality, and we are in the realm where my opponent at Cato wanted us to be: Each of us has our feelings about the issue and they are all of equal worth; so it is nothing more than a battle of conflicting wills in which the majority rules and may enforce its rules upon the minority for the sake of the majority's peace of mind.

By passing laws based on fear and division, we perpetuate fear and division.

Suppose we applied that philosophy to our segregation example, that we simply accepted the fact that whites had these sentiments and then enacted zoning laws on that basis. Notice what would happen. We would indeed alleviate whites' worries about African-Americans living in their neighborhoods. However, instead of eliminating misunderstanding, fear and racism, we will have institutionalized and entrenched them.

We will have erected barriers to understanding and entrenched a division among people. In other words, by passing laws based on fear and division, we perpetuate fear and division. Instead of possibly freeing people from their misconceptions and misapprehensions, we solidify them and, in fact, remove the conditions under which true personal growth and rapprochement are possible. It is as true with guns as with the color of men's skins.

Passing laws based on sentiments will indeed reinforce those sentiments, and flatter, benefit and buttress the peace of mind of those who desire such laws, but at the price of creating a state of perpetual war with men of opposing sentiment. Only laws based on ethical principles of universal degree will avoid the institution of this form of civil war, but those who are ruled imperiously by their sentiments readily mistake them for the True, the Good and the Beautiful, and are eager to extend their sway over others at the point of a gun. It is a bad road to travel, but it seems to be the one we are on.



Jeff Snyder is the author of Nation of Cowards— Essays on the Ethics of Gun Control, available from Accurate Press (1-800-374-4049). He can be reached at jsnyder@ekks.com

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TAFFIN TESTS

Continued from page 42

holster include the Cheyenne, Russell, Montanan, Kansas, Utah, Colorado and Texas. Each area had its custom leather workers who made slight changes in the original design by using one or two loops, wide or slim loops and leaving more or less trigger guard exposed.

I recently traded into an SAA .44 Special that was really special. The finish is nickel with a blued cylinder and barrel, 5½" in length; the grips are heart-stoppin' gorgeous, made of milky, one-piece ivory. The barrel is inscribed "Colt Frontier Six-Shooter (Bisley Model)."

However, I knew from the serial number that this is a Second Generation SAA manufactured in 1960, while the barrel is a .44-40 from a Colt Bisley Model that has not been made since 1912. Somewhere along the line, this old Colt was probably fitted with a .44 Special cylinder and the Bisley .44-40 barrel. It works fine, because .44-40 barrels from Colt have always been cut the same as their .44 Special barrels. The final result is a great-shootin', great-lookin' sixgun.

Such a sixgun needed a great scabbard and belt. A look through Rawhide Walt's catalog revealed a most attractive Cheyenne loop holster that he calls the Colorado. This single-weight holster and belt are finished with a stamping design that Walt came up with that resembles basketweave. The pattern looks more like connected oval spots.

The belt and holster have both been stamped with this unique design and then accented with border stampings. The holster is finished off with two small conchos at the back edge of the holster loops. It's attractive and practical leather for cowboy shooting, woods bumming, hunting or whatever.

When I examined the Ostin rig, it brought forth emotions from my childhood, when I watched *The Lone Ranger* on TV. Clayton Moore used several similar, but slightly different, rigs in his role as the Lone Ranger. (Moore, by the way, was a pretty accomplished sixgun handler.)

The first rig was used by radio Ranger Brace Beemer in his public appearances and then by Moore in the late 1940s; the second carried Moore's matched .45s from 1950 to 1956; and the final rig was used from 1956 on. All three rigs look identical until examined closely.

Ostin has replicated the third rig, complete with floral carving, black finish and all the silver adornments. The beautiful silver on this rig was custom crafted by Conrad Anderson. These rigs were all fashioned long before the advent of the modern fast-draw sport-rig with its metal lining.

The holsters themselves are of the

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Mexican Loop style, but the part of the holster designed to house the bottom of the trigger guard has been sewn to the holster itself, so the complete trigger guard rides outside the holster for a faster draw.

Kirkpatrick Leather

Going back even further in history, we find the rigs offered by Kirkpatrick Leather Company. Kirkpatrick has been offering law enforcement leather for over 30 years and is now also heavily into Old West reproductions. Their catalog contains more than a dozen examples of such rigs, plus many double rigs, that is, rigs with two holsters.

When I was contacted by Mike Kirkpatrick and furnished with a catalog, the rig that really caught my eye was the Model 1865 Prospector. As I acquire various rigs from custom crafters, I try to get something just a mite different each time. The Model 1865 consists of California Pattern, or Slim Jim, holsters that were popularized first in California during the 1850s. Most Slim Jims are made to hang at a crossdraw angle; however, this rendition features two matching holsters that hang straight.

Two of my favorite cowboy shooting sixguns are a pair of Ruger Vaqueros, stainless, fitted with stag stocks and chambered in .45 Colt with 7½" barrels. When I shoot both Traditional and Blackpowder classes in the same match, these sixguns are my first choice, as they both shoot to the same point-of-aim with 950 fps smokeless loads and full-house blackpowder loads. The stainless finish also makes blackpowder cleanup all that much easier after the match.

These are heavy sixguns and when mated with a heavy double rig, it makes for a long day. Kirkpatrick's Model 1865 is made of double leather, but it's lightweight, with a cartridge belt that is 2" in width. The holsters, which have no extra leather to add weight or bulk, also ride high, out of the way, not interfering with a smooth draw. This rig has now been worn through six matches, and it continues to be a favorite.

After finding how comfortable the 1865 was when used with my Ruger Vaqueros, I ordered a second set. The first is black and floral-carved, so the new rig was ordered in a tan basketweave finish, with a belt sans cartridge loops. The holsters were fitted to the 1860 Army Colt .44 for true blackpowder competition. Without cartridges, this quality rig is even easier to wear all day.

Pleasant Valley

It was recently my good pleasure to examine the work of Dusty Johnson, of the Pleasant Valley Saddle Shop. Johnson is a saddle maker and holster crafter of the highest order, plying his trade from the mountains of Colorado. Every leathermaker worth his stitching needle finds his own niche and

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Johnson's is "legends of the Wild West," or Hollywood holsters.

His offerings are not replicas of any particular Western star, but rather a blending of the type of rig worn by such as the king of the cowboys, Roy Rogers, and the fast-draw, metal-lined, drop-loop holsters that came out of the shop of Arvo Ojala in the 1950s.

Johnson readily admits he is somewhat flamboyant, as he makes only Buscadero-style rigs with drop-loop holsters and silver spots and will not make a plain rig. His credentials contain the fact that his teachers along the way have been Bob Brown, who made much of the B-Western movie leather during the 1930s and 1940s, Arvo Ojala, who invented the Hollywood drop-loop holster, and the near-legendary John Bianchi.

Those old Western holsters designed by Bob Brown were lightweight and rode rather high. Johnson's rigs combine the ideas of Brown with those of Ojala, as his holsters are metal-lined and ride much lower for an easier draw. Whether finished with basket stamping, geometric patterns or floral carving, Johnson's rigs are extremely eye-appealing. In fact, the rig I had on my desk for several days became the main attraction in my office, after which my wife had to take it to work so all the truck drivers could see it. The rig created a great deal of traffic in her office, also.

Johnson uses one basic design, but the permutations of the embellishments make each rig a truly custom affair. Silver holster buckles, conchos, belt buckles, silver spots and names or initials carried out in silver can all be varied for many possibilities.

Colors run from tan to black to a combination thereof, and every rig is finished with saddle oil for long life, even under hard usage.



Walt Ostin's work is top-notch and highly recommended. He can be contacted at Custom Gun Leather, 1260 Fisher Rd., RR #2, Dept. AH, Cobble Hill, BC Canada VOR 1LO; phone: (250) 743-9015.

If you are interested in quality silver ornamentation to fancy-up any leather, custom silversmith Conrad Anderson is at P.O. Box 153, Dept. AH, Paulden, AZ 86334; phone: (520) 636-0401.

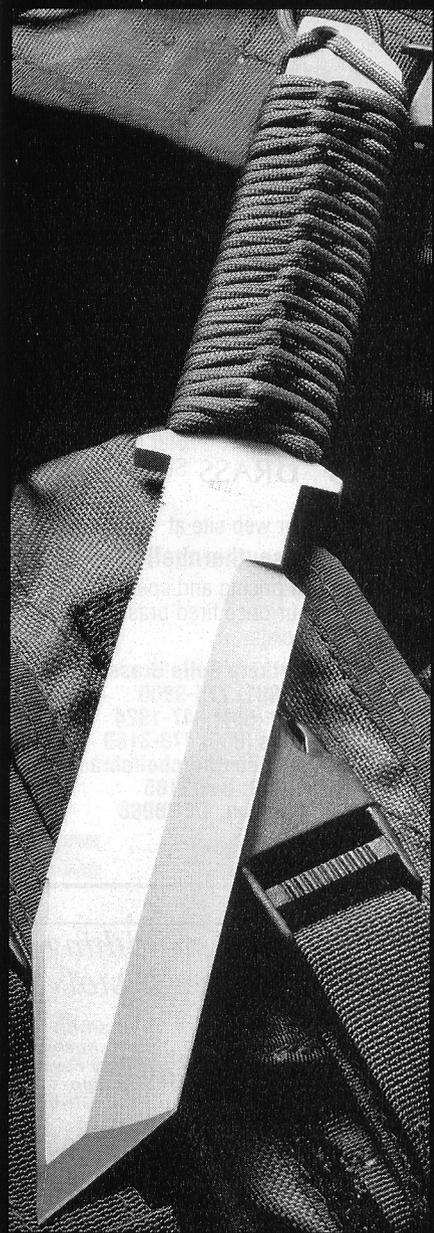
Readers can find Kirkpatrick Leather at P.O. Box 3150, Dept. AH, Laredo, TX 78044; phone: (956) 723-6631.

Dusty Johnson can be contacted at Pleasant Valley Saddle Shop, 1220 S. County Rd. 21, Dept. AH, Loveland, CO 80537; phone: (970) 669-1588; website: www.pvsaddleshop.com.

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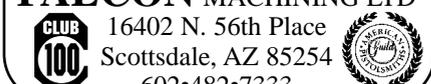
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AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 46

The first responding cop was San Bernardino County Deputy Danielle French, a brand-new officer who nonetheless gathered the facts expertly. A description of the three black male perpetrators and their vehicle was quickly broadcast to all law-enforcement officers in the area.

Moments later, Senior Deputy James Morgan, 32, of the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department, spotted a red 1987 Hyundai Excel with three occupants, one driving and two in the backseat. He saw the car pull onto the I-15 on-ramp as if to evade him. Morgan spun the wheel of his Ford Crown Victoria patrol car to follow them. We lapse now to real time.

Coming down the steeply curving on-ramp, the red car slows almost to a stop. Still not certain he has the right vehicle, Morgan has grabbed the radio microphone and is about to key it when two men lean out the open rear windows of the Hyundai. Each extends a large auto pistol one-handed, aiming at eye level.

Morgan ducks as they open fire, *bam-bambam*, a rapid fusillade of some eight shots. Two 185 gr. Winchester Silvertip .45 slugs punch through the windshield, missing him but spraying him with stinging glass fragments. A flurry of 9mm bullets drill into the cowling at the front of the patrol car.

Then the red car accelerates, and Morgan follows, ducking down behind the dashboard as he radios the location and the fact that he is under fire and in pursuit. Radio traffic is all but drowned out as, from as far as 30 miles away, other deputies excitedly report that they are responding.

The chase continues, at speeds of 70 to 90 mph. Glass fragments from the bullet-pierced windshield continue to dislodge, biting into his hands and face. Morgan is still the only car behind them, although he knows other units are racing to join the pursuit.

SBSD has one of the largest air wings of any U.S. police department and one of the few whose observers are trained to end running shootouts with air-to-ground fire. However, none of the helicopters are in the immediate area, and high winds prevent more remotely available units from reaching the scene in time.

Major Firepower

More shots are fired. Morgan aches to shoot back. He sorts out his options logically and realizes it isn't the thing to do. He's carrying a personally-owned SIG P-226 9mm pistol, and a Remington 870 12 gauge is racked to his dashboard.

His trunk contains the department's standard-issue Ruger Mini-14 .223 rifle and, since Morgan is an on-call sniper for the SWAT team, his own .308 precision

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rifle, a finely scoped Tikka capable of minute-of-angle accuracy. Realistically, though, he can't deploy any of them while driving at this speed.

The crooks and the cop pass one car containing a husband, wife and young son, the boy staring out the window in wide-eyed wonder at the blazing chase. Morgan realizes that the gunmen are about to shoot at them, and the little boy is in the line of fire.

Gunmen hang out either side, firing at him again.

Morgan swerves to the left to draw the crooks' fire away from the family's car. The driver of the getaway car cuts to the right to give his cohorts a better angle of fire at the deputy. Morgan ducks pistol bullets again.

The cars veer onto the 395 exit, heading toward Palmdale, and Morgan realizes other police cars have caught up and joined the chase behind him. Until now, his only lifeline to others has been the radio connecting him with his cool, competent dispatcher, Rodey O'Keefe.

One of the other officers, SBSB detective Mike Steele from the Hesperia station, tries returning fire. He empties his S&W .45 auto, but none of the bullets hit the fugitive sedan. The gunmen open fire on the officers again.

The vehicles are now on a secondary two-lane highway called Phelan Road. The chase comes to a deep dip in the road. Morgan loses sight of the suspects momentarily, and, as he comes over the crest of the hill into the dropoff, he realizes they have slowed to ambush him.

Crips Ambush

Gunmen hang out either side, firing at him again, one in such a tight Weaver stance that it seems from Morgan's visual perspective that he must be holding a rifle. Jim ducks again as bullets hit his car, this time tearing into the undercarriage. For the first time, it occurs to him that he is awfully close to death.

He pictures his wife and young daughter. He knows that if he pulls over now and stops chasing them, with his vehicle shot to pieces, no one will blame him. But he also knows that if these dangerous men get away, they'll terrorize others, perhaps kill other cops.

Right now, he's in the best position to stay with them and stop them. "In for a penny, in for a pound," he thinks to himself. He continues the pursuit.

Over the radio, Morgan hears that brother officers are "setting up" at Sheep Creek Road, which is coming up fast. In moments, as they approach that intersection, Morgan can see unmarked cars at

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the side of the road and plainclothes officers holding shotguns and Mini-14 rifles.

Jim Morgan knows what's going to happen. The deadly pursuit has covered more than 30 miles and lasted more than twenty minutes, but now the end is in sight.

Killers at Bay

Morgan is already going for his brakes when he sees the fugitive vehicle run the gauntlet of his brother officers' rifle and shotgun fire, and he is amazed when it survives the barrage and keeps going. It travels another mile before it begins to slow out of control. He would later learn that a .223 bullet had pierced the Hyundai's left rear tire.

The deputy brings the patrol car to a stop on the right side of the road, tilting slightly to the right because of the road surface, as the Hyundai squeals to a stop ahead of him on the left side, next to a culvert. He grabs the Remington 870 from its dashboard lock and throws open his door, only to realize that something large is bearing down on him swiftly from behind.

He ducks back reflexively, the door closing behind him from gravity, just in time to save his life. Had he kept moving forward, he would have been struck and the driver's door torn away by the police car that races past him in a full-locked skid, coming to a stop between him and the offenders.

Raging Gunfight

As Morgan racks a round of 00 buck-shot into the chamber, many things are happening at once. The deputy sees the left rear door of the suspects' car swing open, and now the moon-faced man is thrusting a big silver pistol up toward him, one-handed, obviously aiming.

Morgan brings the shotgun to bear, trying to aim past the patrol car and— out of the car now himself— moving to the right to get a safe angle to fire. He sees the gunman glance around furtively at the long line of police cars that are screaming to a stop, on his right and the deputy's left.

The killer has to see that those cars are disgorging cops with drawn guns. He unquestionably sees Morgan himself, leveling a shotgun in a determined and confident stance. For the first time in his life, the gunman isn't looking at a helpless victim, but at an armed man prepared to kill him.

The gunman lowers his pistol, turns his back on the officers and tosses the still-cocked automatic into the backseat through the open backdoor of his car. His body is a study in contrasts as he raises his hands in surrender to show that he is now unarmed, yet he defiantly walks away from the officers, across the culvert and up the sandy hill on the left side of the road.

Morgan dismisses him. Other officers are closing in on the moving suspect. There are still two more dangerous men

in the car. His shotgun at his shoulder and ready, Morgan moves toward the car.

Conway is the next to exit the Hyundai. He, too, raises his hands to show he is no longer fighting, and walks after his companion toward the high desert hill.

Knowing that brother officers are closing in on this one, too, and that he is nearest the still-dangerous man at the wheel of the getaway car, Morgan turns his attentions there.

The driver is next to exit. Morgan roars a command to halt. The driver ignores the police command and, like his cohorts, walks defiantly up the berm, disappearing from view.

The long line of responding officers moves forward as one, guns up and ready. Some 20 steps up the berm, they come to a level spot where the three outlaws had stopped. They had apparently seen their future and realized it was short: All three had gone to ground and assumed the felony prone position. It is, given their histories, a posture with which they were familiar. They lay motionless only a few feet apart.

Meek Surrender

The sullen, bearded Conway did not resist. Deputies handcuffed him where he lay. A single deputy moved forward and knelt on the prone Robinson's shoulder to stabilize him. Before more officers could reach him to assist, the deputy spotted a Smith & Wesson Model 5906 9mm pistol in the sand, inches from Robinson's right hand and... that hand was creeping toward the pistol!

There was only an instant in which to react. The deputy considered shooting the suspect in the back of the head, but realized how that would look and that a gunshot could trigger a "chainfire" among the many tense officers present with guns in their hands. Instead, he swung his own pistol.

The deputy's Ruger P-85 9mm auto hit Robinson's skull with a solid *thunk*. The top of the downed suspect's head appeared to fly away. One observing deputy thought, "My God, he scalped him!" Robinson slumped, dazed, and drew his hand back from the Smith & Wesson as if it was red hot. He was handcuffed, and the pistol was secured.

Only then did the deputies realize that Robinson, completely hairless due to a disease called alopecia, had been wearing a full Afro wig as a disguise. The deputy's blow had knocked it away from the murder suspect's head.

It was over. Incredibly, no one had been shot. An estimated 35 rounds of 9mm and .45 ACP bullets had been fired at Jim Morgan. Half a dozen had hit his car. None had touched him directly. But a deputy said, "Jim, you're bleeding."

Jim Morgan had always taken every training opportunity he could. He had first studied police survival with me in

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Los Angeles in the early '80s, and had graduated from my 40-hour Lethal Threat Management for Police class in Apple Valley, Calif., two months before the shooting. In the latter program, I'd made the point that officers should wear safety glasses at all times, and he had taken me seriously, wearing them ever since.

Morgan's face was covered with tiny cuts from the flying glass. He took off the Ray-Bans that had protected his eyes. Nothing had gotten past them, but the lenses were badly abraded by the hurtling glass particles from the bullet-pierced windshield. Morgan realized that without them, he would have been blinded.

At 90 miles an hour, he wouldn't have been a blind man long before becoming a dead man. The protective lenses had saved not only his eyesight, but his life.

Epilogue

The fully loaded 5906 that Robinson was kept from reaching had apparently not been fired. The guns he and Conway had fired repeatedly at Jim Morgan were recovered from the backseat of the Hyundai where they had tossed them, still cocked and off-safe, with rounds in the chambers.

One was a blue steel Beretta 92F with Pachmayr grips. It was traced to a murder in L.A. The other was a Smith & Wesson Model 645. It was the latter pistol that had discharged the .45 Silvertips that had come so close to killing the senior deputy.

It could have been worse. Armed with warrants, police soon raided the robbers' lair in Los Angeles. They recovered multiple heavy weapons, including a MAC-10 and a Tec-9 equipped with silencers, an AR-15 mounting an electronic dot sight, and an AK-47.

Conway, Robinson and Jackson were convicted of multiple counts of kidnapping, armed robbery, attempted murder of a police officer and related offenses. With their extensive felony records taken into account, they were sentenced to multiple consecutive life sentences in prison. Jackson turned state's evidence against his cohorts. On the basis of his testimony, Robinson and Conway were subsequently convicted for the murder of the female cashier in the Barstow check-cashing office, and Conway was indicted for three other murders.

Jim Morgan received numerous awards for his heroism. He went on to teach at the academy and to become a team leader of San Bernardino SWAT. At this writing, he is the sergeant in charge of the Sheriff's Department's Firearms Training Center.

A role model for both new and in-service deputies, Morgan encourages them all to wear body armor...and to wear something to protect their eyes whenever they are on patrol. He is living proof of the wisdom of discreetly wearing protective gear when going in harm's way.



PROFILE

Continued from page 78

Due to its small diameter, a 9x23 case sits high in the magazine, closer to the bore's centerline than a .45 cartridge. The .38 Super is known for its feeding reliability, the semi-rimmed case notwithstanding. The rimless Winchester 9x23 case, which is slightly tapered, chambers and extracts more reliably than the vaunted .38 Super.

And because it shoots so flat, one may download cases to minor power factors for practice without greatly affecting the bullet's point of impact.

Martial Gun

In any caliber, a Burns Custom 1911 is a simple looking, martial artist's gun. Front straps are typically clean, "Because although checkering looks nice, it doesn't really do anything (which can't be done with other technology) except cost money." Burns admits. Although he is willing and able, Burns doesn't do much checkering.

"It's easy to flatten a diamond, which can be fixed on 20 lpi. But 30 lpi is too delicate for a work gun which might be ground into the pavement while scuffing with a bad guy. Serrations on the front and backstrap help the user retain the gun in bad conditions, and these seem worth the money," Burns stated.

The highest quality parts are standard. "I use Videcki triggers, a match McCormick hammer and sear. Combined with a match McCormick disconnecter, these parts produce a durable and crisp trigger, worth every penny," Burns said.

"Many smiths subcontract their barrels, but I use Bar-Sto barrels. The quality is exceptional and worth the wait. I could make more money by having them built with my name on them—and I have—but it's not worth the runaround."

Contrary to the trend, Burns builds 1911s without guide rods. "The gun isn't any more reliable with a guide rod in it. Honestly. It adds weight, which can be good or bad. I put a cap in it and a Wolff 16.5 lb. spring with a Shok Buff behind it, which is fine for major loads," says the utilitarian pistolsmith.

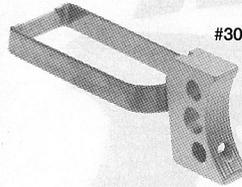
Burns philosophy about "work guns" compels a user to purchase the absolute best pistol he can. "You are betting your life on the gun. Reliability and precise handling are only about a third of the equation, but one cannot avoid spending money on quality parts and workmanship to achieve these goals," he says.

Burns believes another third of any pistol's whole is the magazine. "I've fixed many feeding problems by making the owner buy Wilson mags. I insist on them, and deliver such with each of my guns," Burns said.

The last third is ammunition. "If you want the gun to run reliably and shoot accurately, you have to spend the extra

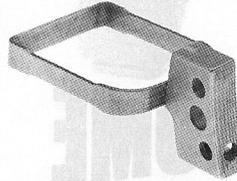
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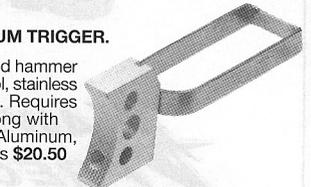
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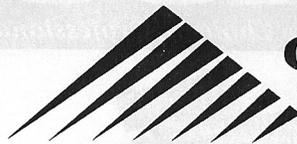
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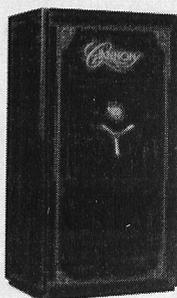
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cash for the highest quality Winchester and Federal ammunition. Or tune a hand-load to the specific gun," he advises.

Added to any shooting equation are the shooter's physical skills. "The gun won't solve any problems by itself. But it should allow its user to become a better shooter. I typically mill a mild mag well on my guns, rather than adding a spare part to the mainspring housing. I think the shooter ought to learn how to reload without one. The guns are lighter and more comfortable to carry too," he added.

Test Shooting

One might not expect a "work gun" to shoot as well as the best raceguns, despite similar cost. I can assure you that Dane's guns not only run, but will shoot dime-sized groups at 25 yards— with the right load, of course.

Trigger action is crisp and fast. During testing I was routinely shooting .17 splits on close targets. The 9x23 cartridge recoils sharply backward without the muzzle rise common to a .45 so the sights remain on the target from shot to shot.

Target acquisition with the Heinie Straight 8 sights was rapid, the flat rear surface causing less eye distraction than a Novak. Burns serrates the back of the slide to match the rear of Heinie sights. These serrations cut glare dramatically, even on a hard chromed gun.

I liked Dane's personal gun, kindly loaned for testing, due to its .110" front sight, which covers less of the target. His personal gun also features a proprietary lightened slide made for him by Caspian. Lighter on the hip, the gun's reduced weight also allows it to track faster from target to target and stop on a dime with little inertia to overcome.

Shot-to-shot recoil handling feels like an Open Class racegun, especially shooting minor (or IDPA) loads. It's a sandbagger's dream come true.

Recoil is sharper with factory loads, causing some concern about durability. But Burns recently sold a lightweight model after running over 20,000 full house loads through it, and there was plenty of life left in the gun.

Finally, a Burns Custom Pistol is built to endure. Despite the current fashion of coating guns, and his own liking for black guns, Burns insists on hard chroming pistols for serious use. "Armand Swenson hard chromed all of his guns that went to Southeast Asia in the '60s and '70s and most of them are still around.

"Short of resisting saltwater, hard chrome beats other finishes hands down. You could pass the gun down to your children. And that's what I expect from my work— that it will last," Burns concluded.



Readers can reach Dane Burns at 700 Gilman Ave #116, Issaquah, WA 98027; phone: (425) 391-3202; fax: (425) 391-3139; website: www.burnscustom.com

GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

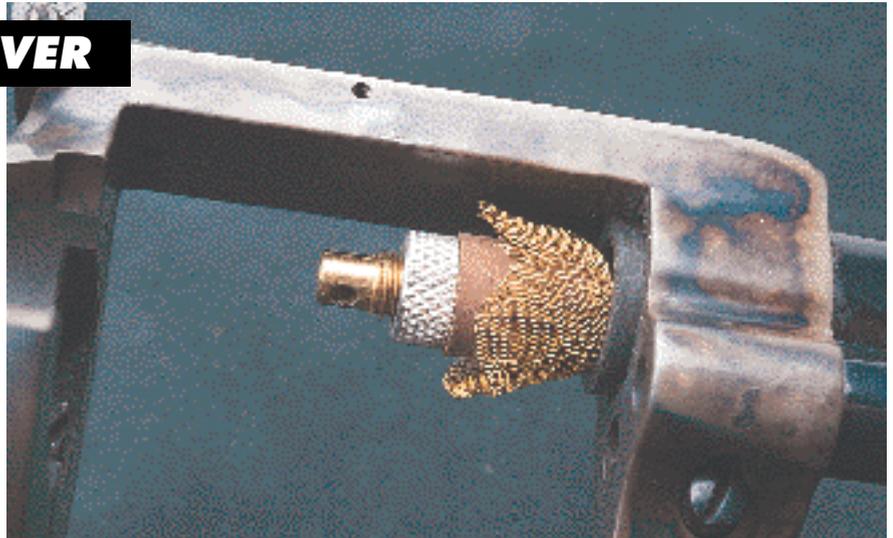
LEWIS LEAD REMOVER

This wonderful tool seems to have been around forever, but I am amazed at the number of young shooters who have never heard of it. If you shoot lead bullets, the odds are that you'll need one someday.

Leading is almost always our own fault for trying to push cast bullets faster than we should, but sometimes it's not easy to find a cause. While the word "hardcast" really doesn't tell us much, I'd point out that lead alloys come in a huge variety. Few of us have the ability to measure that sort of stuff.

The Lewis Lead Remover is really a simple product that does exactly what it's advertised to do and has stood the test of time. At first glance, it's a cleaning rod with a rubber tip and a funny-looking patch. The patch is bronze screen, and it is *pulled* through the bore. The screen simply scrapes the lead out.

Strings of the stuff precede the patch as you pull it out. You can adjust the ten-



sion on the rubber tip, and it's best to start with a setting that is pretty easy to pull and then, in several passes, gradually tighten it until all the lead is removed. Normally this takes only two or three passes.

All you do is insert the rod from the muzzle, screw on the patch and pull.

The tools are available from Brownells, and many gun shops have them in stock. 

For more information contact Brownells Inc., 200 South Front St., Dept AH, Montezuma, IA 50170; phone: (641) 623-4000; website: www.brownells.com

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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

WALKER'S GAME EAR

Hearing protection is the second most important accessory for a shooter. Number one is eye protection. Within the last few years there has been a veritable explosion in electronic hearing protection of every shape and style, but there are some times when conventional earmuffs are just too big.

The Walker's Game Ear looks for all the world like a behind-the-ear hearing aid connected to a foam ear plug. And, like many of today's electronic muffs, it amplifies ambient sound and shuts down when the noise reaches a preset level.

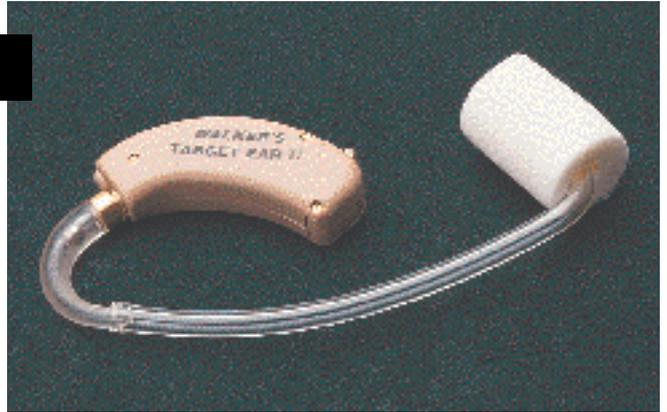
The unit also has AFT (adjustable frequency tuning) which changes the "emphasis" to higher or lower frequencies. My hearing loss is more noticeable at the higher end, and that was easily adjusted. Obviously, everyone will need a period of trial and error to get the adjustment individualized.

The volume control has settings from zero to three, with zero being off. It was

easy to hear the effect of changing the volume. For me, a setting near two provided the most natural sound. At three, there was noticeable amplification up to the point that I heard my own breathing. Again, this is an individual thing.

The Game Ear can be used in either ear, and a solid foam plug is included for the other side. Even though it only weighs a little over 4 ozs., there is a period of "getting used to" for finding comfortable levels and position on the ear. Once that's done, the ear holds it in place nicely.

The instructions include a warning to remove the batteries (#13 hearing aid size) when the unit is not going to be used for a day or two. Smart advice. I found the battery dead after a week



without use, even though the switch was in the zero position.

I only had a chance to use it at the range and found it to be most effective, but I suspect it would be even better in the hunting field where acute hearing is a big plus, but hearing protection is needed as well. 

For more information contact Walker's Game Ear, P.O. Box 1069, Dept. AH, Media, PA 19063; phone: (800) 424-1069; website: www.walkersgameear.com

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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

SPYDERCO SHARPENER

Spyderco's Tri-Angle Sharp-maker caught my eye because it looks like it would allow even a moron to sharpen a knife. I freely admit that I'm a klutz when it comes to sharpening knives. My friends who, have grown tired of me showing up with a boxful for them to sharpen in their spare time. *They* will positively love the Sharpmaker.

The best news is that it comes with a 45-minute tape that shows how to sharpen almost anything. Knives, both plain or serrated, scissors, shop tools and even darts can be sharpened with the multitude of configurations available. The unit comes with four triangular sharp stones (two each, coarse and fine) that can be mounted in a variety of positions on the base.

When you start with a dull knife, there are four steps using both grades of stone, but once the proper edge is restored,



keeping it is quick and easy.

There are also two smaller brass rods that serve as handguards, and the top provides a good handle. Best of all is that it can be set up for either right- or left-handed users.

I've had a Sharpmaker for several months, and my house is now a danger

zone. For the first time since they were new, all my knives are sharp again.



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GUNNY SACK

By Charles E. Petty

SPEER COWBOY BULLETS

When a company markets a product and tells you how wonderful it is without much other information, they are really saying, "Trust me." In a country where a majority would probably complete that phrase with, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you," there may be a tendency to raise a red flag and sniff the air carefully for strange odors.

Very little information is available about Speer's new Idaho Territory swaged lead cowboy bullets. The proprietary coating that makes them so unique is covered by a strict non-disclosure agreement with the inventor. They simply won't say much about it, except that it is very effective and, in their standard tests for leading, this was the only product that left no lead behind.

Speer is one of the most helpful companies I know, so if they can't talk about something, it's okay with me. My limited experience with these bullets con-

firms their claims.

The lube is a three-layer coating. Just by looking, you can tell that one of those is molybdenum. The coating seems to be relatively hard, and Speer reports that it is so resistant to temperature that the lead inside will start to melt before there is a change in the coating. The coating is applied over a swaged lead bullet.

One of the advantages for cowboy shooters is that the bullet diameter is one or two thousandths larger than normal. The .45 Colt, for example, is 0.454", which comes closer to matching up with cylinder mouths on most older revolvers. There are currently four flat nose calibers available: .38 158 gr. (.358"), .44 200 gr. (.430"), .45 225 gr. (.454") and .45-70 405 gr. (.459").



Some very limited shooting has shown them to be satisfyingly accurate, and they leave the bore quite clean. There was no evidence of reduced bullet pull as is sometimes seen with moly-coated bullets, but a good



crimp is still advisable. For more information contact CCI-Speer, P.O. Box 856, Dept. AH, Lewiston, ID 83501; phone: (800) 666-5761; website: www.speer-bullets.com

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PURVEYOR

Continued from page 71

They go quick! Buck Knives offers a line of Carson-designed fixed blade fighters.

Pat and Wes Crawford: Pat Crawford is truly one of the most well-known and highly respected names in tactical knives. He and son Wes build some of the best handmade tactical folders and fixed blades in the biz. His best seller is one called the "Kasper Model," designed by knife-fighting expert Bob Kasper.

Allen Elishewitz: Allen is a youngster compared to most in the custom knife industry, but he's been a top 10 tactical folder maker for well over five years now. He's known for his ultra-slick designs and incredible craftsmanship.

Greg Lightfoot: This Canadian knife-maker is one of the smoothest designers in the industry. Greg's knife patterns are Zen-like in their flow. His tacticals are extremely well-built and finely finished.

Ken Onion: Onion's innovative designs have breathed new life into Kershaw Knives, and his handmades are even nicer. His "speed safe" design turns a conventional folding knife into a switchblade—legally. It has to be seen to be believed.

Bob Terzuola: Bob was one of the original tactical folder artisans. Known for his clean design and bullet-proof construction, Terzuola has collaborated with some of the top production knife companies over the years, including Spyderco.

Brian Tighe: Another Canadian knife-maker with exceptional design skills. A master machinist by trade, Tighe goes the extra mile when it comes to fit and finish.

Howard Viele: Howard's knives seem sharp enough to cut with looks alone. Wicked design and fine workmanship are the hallmarks of this maker's work. He's been around for years, but has vaulted into the tactical spotlight only recently. One look at his knives and you'll know why.

These are just a few of the makers whose work Jay keeps on hand. The list will typically include knives from over 75 different custom knifemakers. In addition, AZCK offers production knives by several of the top tactical manufacturers, including Emerson, Benchmade, Micro-Tech and Mad Dog.

The Sadows stay on top of what's happening in the knife world, traveling to shows across the U.S. Their long relationship with the top knifemakers guarantees they get a good selection of the makers' latest works.

Knifemaker Allen Elishewitz appreciates their hard work. "I met Jay and Karen at my first Knifemaker's Guild Show in 1994. They have been my customers ever since and it has always been a pleasure dealing with them," says Elishewitz. "They bring a fresh perspective in the cutlery industry because they are among the few dealers willing to support new ideas."

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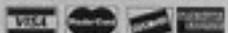
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I asked Jay his secret to obtaining the right knives that people will want to buy, and he responded, "You have to have a good rapport with the established makers who are in demand all the time, and then you need to be able to spot the up-and-comers who'll be tomorrow's stars. The knife market is constantly evolving—especially in the fast-paced tactical arena—and if you don't stay on top of it, you're going to end up with a handful of knives in your personal collection."

Established Clientele

AZCK has established a strong and steady client base over the years, primarily through their catalog. Their website, however, has allowed them to reach a worldwide market that wouldn't have been possible a few years ago. While most of the customers are knife collectors, AZCK's list of offerings—from modest pricing to if-you-have-to-ask—also appeals to users who want to buy a hard-use knife without the wait.

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For those on a budget, the latest catalog, by way of example, includes custom tacticals in the \$300 to \$400 range. If you've got an itch to spend more, the Sadows offer spectacular tactical knives with exotic handle materials and blade steels that run into the thousands of dollars.

If you do nothing more than just subscribe to the AZCK list, the education you'll get from reading the knife descriptions is well worth it. "People tell us how much they enjoy our website. Many tell us they collect our catalogs and use them for reference material. We just smile and shake our heads in wonder that we have earned that kind of respect and recognition in such a relatively short amount of time. But those comments make us work harder to provide the best possible customer service so that we continue to live up to those expectations.

"We're having the time of our lives, but we take our business seriously," says Jay. "Our company motto is 'Your collection is our first priority,' and we live those words daily."



If you have any interest in collecting nice knives, or buying a hard-working tactical made by one of the top makers, contact the Sadows at Arizona Custom Knives, 8617 E. Clydesdale Trail, Scottsdale, AZ 85258; phone: (480) 951-0699; E-mail: sharptalk@aol.com; website: www.arizonacustomknives.com

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HOME DEFENSE

Continued from page 69

If it looks like an errant shot would go through walls and kill innocent people, your options just went down.

You can simply decide, "I won't shoot from here." Unfortunately, the intruder may not cooperate with this policy.

You can decide, "I'll use a very low penetration round, like tiny birdshot." That may mitigate the penetration problem, but that which won't penetrate sheet rock also won't punch through human flesh deeply enough to stop a big, aggressive armed criminal, either.

Or, you can put a backstop in place.

I know people who've bulletproofed their walls. They all had certain things in common: they had already been terrorized once, and they had lots of money. Not too many of us can follow their lead. So, let's look at alternatives.

File cabinets, even sheet steel ones, won't stop much by themselves. If they're packed with printed matter, however, they become backstops for handgun and shotgun rounds. From the side, bullets can slip between the file folders and documents. Position them so that impacts will be front to back.

Densely packed bookshelves can also act as backstops. Naturally, the bookshelves and file cabinets can also act as cover. You want to be where the flat of each book in the stack, not its edge, is between you and the "incoming." Again, you want everything densely packed, with air spaces filled in. You want the material to be at least the full height of the tallest person in your home who's likely to take cover behind it.

Most magazines are about the same size. This produces much more even stacking with fewer air spaces. For use as cover, stack two rows of magazines, and make sure they're tightly packed with the flats toward the predictable angle of opposite fire.

"Stopping" Power

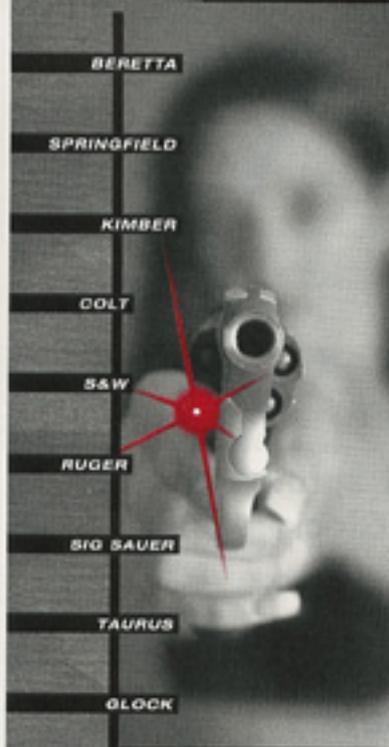
I tested the efficacy of these home-made bullet stops at the range with a stack of paperbacks. I used Winchester ammunition. Winchester's .45 ACP 185 gr. Silvertip invariably mushrooms, and it stays in the human body roughly nine times out of 10, according to a medical examiner who has done 30 to 40 autopsies on people killed with the round. Fired from the 4 1/4" barrel of a Ruger P-90, the .45 Silvertip deformed significantly and stopped 3 3/4" into a stack of paperbacks.

A Winchester USA brand 230 gr. FMJ slug from the same .45 stopped in less than 6"- 5 3/4" to be exact. It showed no deformation. This bullet will usually exit a human body, and can pierce more than two feet of ballistic gelatin.

A 200 gr. .44 Special Silvertip also

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deformed dramatically and stopped in only 2¼" of the paperback book material. The gun used was a 4" Smith & Wesson revolver.

Next up was the snubnose .38 Special, a Smith & Wesson Model 442. Winchester's SPD load, the 158 gr. all-lead +P SWCHP that earned an enviable reputation when issued by FBI, Chicago, Metro-Dade and the Mounties, penetrated 4¾", with some deformation. A 130 gr. SXT round from the same gun went only 3¾", and did not expand.

None of these loads needed more than 6" to stop. You don't need the Library of Congress to build a bookshelf that can also serve as a backstop or a cover point. You don't even need books. As noted above, magazines are more likely to be of the same general size and can be packed with less air space. Put them in a cardboard box, tightly packed. Stack the boxes. Voilá: cover and backstop.

Special Loads

Some special purpose loads make sense for home defense, the hollowpoint .223 being a case in point. Some frangible-bullet handgun loads have been recommended on the theory that they won't go through sheetrock but will vaporize an opponent. Actually, the more effective high-energy versions of these rounds may punch right through if they strike on a perpendicular angle.

The old wisdom used to be to load a nightstand shotgun with birdshot. This is devastating at very close range, but at "down the hall" distance, the pellets may have spread enough that they won't have sufficient penetration into a large, heavily clad intruder.

I would personally go with #1 buckshot (20 .30 caliber projectiles) in a full power 12 gauge load, or reduced-recoil 00 buck (nine .33 caliber projectiles), or #3 buckshot (20 .25 caliber pellets) for a 20 gauge home defense shotgun. Caution: Low recoil buckshot won't feed reliably in all 12 gauge autoloaders.

In handgun loads, hollowpoints geared for optimum penetration make sense for home defense. In many calibers, the Silvertip will be a good choice.

A handy home defense gun is the M-1 carbine. Only one hollowpoint is made for it, Winchester's 110 gr. at 1,990 fps. It's the hands-down choice for this purpose.

Home defense is a lot more about the shooter than the gun or the load. It's about consistent application of technique more than equipment. And it's about proper planning, tactics and mindset more than anything.

The first priority is awareness and preparedness. The second is proper use of tactics. Third comes skill with the safety equipment, which includes— but is not limited to— weapons. Only fourth comes the selection of optimum tools— the guns and ammunition— to deal with the predictable threat.



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REDHAWK

Continued from page 63

complete with Ruger rings for mounting a 2X Burris LER pistol scope, and a 5/8" easy-packin' version. The latter was soon equipped with the easy-to-see, baby-blue Ruger front sight, and, to help soften recoil of some of the loads used, a pair of Uncle Mike's finger groove grips replaced the factory wood stocks. These came in handy when it got to test-firing the Redhawks with 265 gr. bullets at 1,465 fps, 335 gr. bullets at 1,275, and 360 grainers at 1,180.

With the scoped Redhawk, accuracy proved to be exceptional— even more remarkable in light of the heavy trigger pull of 6.25 lbs. Of all the loads tested— five factory loads and 23 handloads, using both cast and jacketed bullets with weights from 250 up to 335 gr.— the average group size for five shots at 25 yards with all 28 loads proved to be just over 1". I call that astounding accuracy.

Factory hunting loads tested included two from Buffalo Bore and two from Cor-Bon. Buffalo Bore's 300 gr. Speer bullet load clocks out at 1,367 fps over the sky screens of the Oehler Model 35P and places five shots in .75" at 25 yards. The Buffalo Bore 325 gr. LBT load exhibits the same accuracy with a muzzle velocity of 1,392 fps. These are not faint-hearted loads! They are for use only in modern, heavy-framed .45 Colt sixguns.

Cor-Bon's serious .45 Colt hunting loads include a 265 gr. bonded core +P at 1,347 fps and a 300 grainer at 1,271 fps. Both loads are right at 1" for accuracy at 25 yards.

These loads are for big-boned, heavily muscled critters. For whitetails, my preferred .45 Colt load is Hornady's 250 gr. XTP bullet over 20 grs. of Alliant #2400. In the 7/8" Redhawk, this load clocks out at 1,137 fps and has pinpoint accuracy, with five shots in .875".

The Redhawk has been a popular hunting handgun in its original .44 Magnum chambering. So much so that it was joined rather than supplanted by the Super Redhawk. The Redhawk was simply in too much demand to drop. There is a large segment of the sixgun-shooting population that holds to the idea that anything the .44 can do, the .45 can do better. The .45 Redhawk is definitely for them.

In firing several hundred heavy .45 Colt rounds through the Redhawks, no malfunctions of any kind occurred. This is, of course, exactly what we have come to expect from Ruger sixguns.

We have mentioned that both the .357 Magnum and .41 Magnum chamberings were available in the Redhawk. Both began in 1984 and both were subsequently dropped in 1991. I expect the .45 Colt to have a much longer run.



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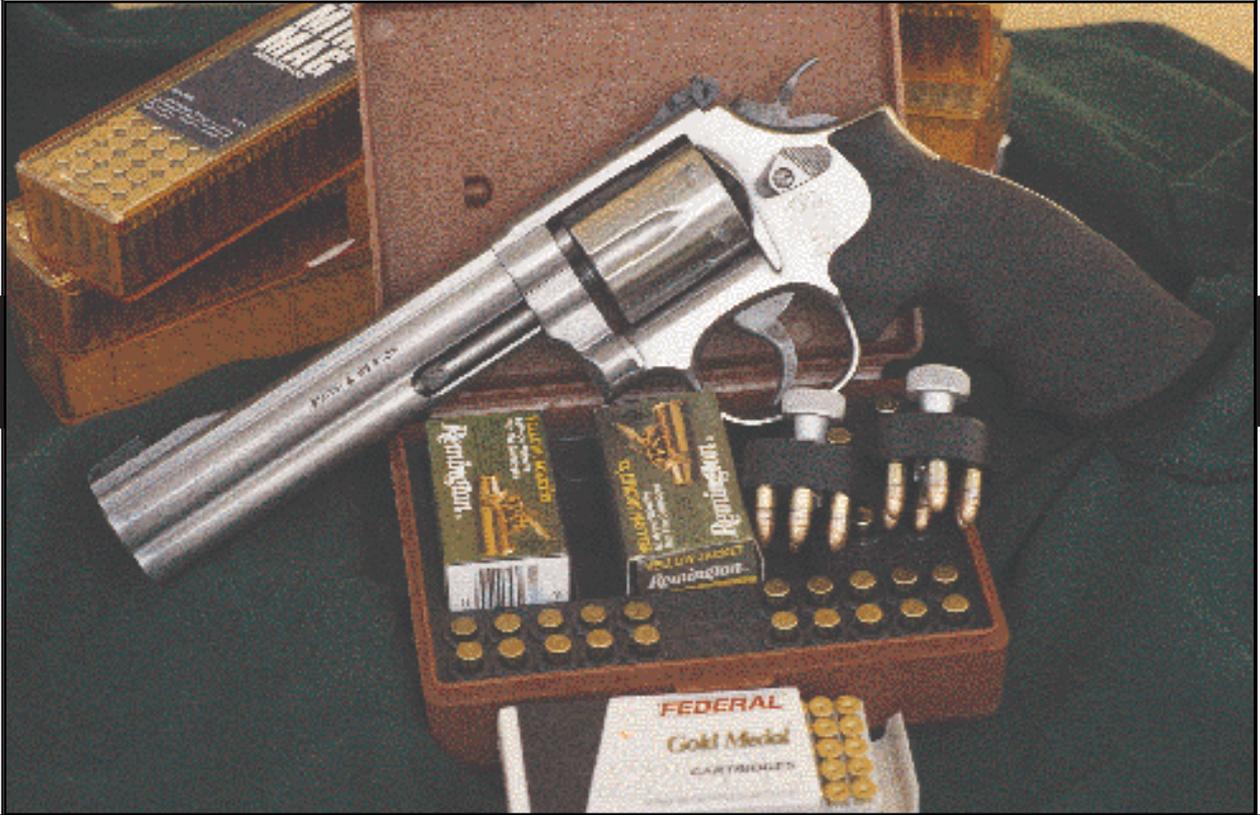


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A MODERN

BY MIKE CUMPSTON

MASTERPIECE

As a linear descendent of the K-22, the Model 617 is a particularly interesting member of the family of Smith & Wesson double-action revolvers. The K-22 Outdoorsman was introduced in 1931 and represented the first serious effort to produce a rimfire target revolver on the Military & Police frame.

In January 1942, the K-22 became part of the Masterpiece triumvirate consisting of the K-22, K-32 and K-38. This was a popular set among dedicated bullseye shooters prompting Elmer Keith to remark, "These are as fine target arms as human ingenuity and modern manufacturing methods have been able to produce to date."

The Masterpiece version had an updated rear sight and ribbed barrel. Shortly after World War II, the barrel rib was sized to bring the .22 to the same unloaded weight as the K-32 and K-38.

The current version, rendered in stainless steel, has the ribbed, heavy, under-lugged barrel common to Smith revolvers

THE MODEL 617 IS A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF SMITH & WESSON'S K-22 MASTERPIECE.

at the turn of the century. The 6" version weighs 45 ozs., a 10 oz. gain over the old Outdoorsman. Weight and overall configuration are nearly identical to several popular variations of the L-frame, the Model 625 and the relatively new, limited production eight-shooters.

While early, hand-fitted Smiths are often credited with having lighter and smoother actions than current production, there is little to fault in my sample. I doubt there has ever been a time when Hand Ejector enthusiasts did not think the basic revolver could stand a bit of tuning. The 617-3 was no exception.

The revolver came from the box with a crisp but heavy 4 lbs. 6 oz. single-action pull. The smooth, double-action pull was between 11 and 12 lbs. I nipped one coil off the trigger return spring. Using a soft wheel loaded with jeweler's compound, I polished the rebound slide, sear and the single-action sear engagements on the hammer and trigger. The entire operation took about 30 minutes and did no mischief to the function or expected service life of the revolver.

The single action let-off now stands at 2 lbs. 12 oz. with a double-action pull of 11 lbs. 14 oz. These values are within ounces

of the trigger pulls on my Smith N-frames, which have received the same treatment.

Two-Fold Job

The performance capabilities of the earlier K-22s are well known. Keith recorded that the Masterpiece series revolvers are capable of producing 1.5" groups at 50 yards. This was a high standard of accuracy in 1955 and remains so today. My job would be two-fold: Find out if the modern product is a worthy successor to the K-22 of distant memory and, if so, use the new handgun to improve my overall revolver shooting skills.

Prior to performing any serious accuracy evaluations, I invested about 600 rounds on bullseyes, metallic silhouettes and falling plates. I wanted to get a general feel for the revolver and reap whatever benefits there might be in lapping the barrel with a quantity of coated lead. At the beginning, I was shooting the 617 well enough to enjoy the process and, as the round count increased, so did my hit ratios.

My first serious 25 yard bench groups were fired with the factory iron sights. I used 1.5" black bullseyes for one five-shot group each of CCI Min-Mag, Mini-Mag JHPs and Federal Gold Medal Match. The factory target sights were so good that I was able to shoot without my 1 diopter lenses and produced groups of 1.13", 0.97" and 0.91".

Most S&W revolvers now come drilled and tapped for the basic Weaver sight base. At my next range session, the 617 wore a Weaver Quik Point with a 4-minute dot. This sight is about as precise as a pistol scope at 25 yards. Five-round groups with Mini-Mag JHPs averaged out to 1.1" The Federal match loads were extremely consistent, producing groups ranging from .66" to .77" with a three group average of .71".

The repeatable accuracy of the target loads augurs well for X-ring accuracy at 50 yards. Without a doubt, the 617 is capable of better accuracy than this shooter can produce from the bench. The modern K-22 lives up to the standard set by its predecessors.

All-Around Plinker

Velocities with my favorite hunting load, the CCI Mini-Mag hollowpoints, were within 30 fps of those from a Ruger Competition Model. Not too shabby a comparison since the Ruger has a 7.5" barrel and no cylinder gap. The load is accurate enough for small game shooting at reasonable ranges. It delivers consistent expansion from rimfire handguns ranging from the 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " barrel Ruger Mk II to the above mentioned Comp Target.

I found the 617 well suited to the long practice sessions needed to refine my double- and single-action shooting techniques. The standard Hogue Monogrips and smooth target width trigger seem ideal for one-hand shooting in both modes.

The 6" barrel has a sighting radius



It may just be a K-frame, but there's a lot of meat around those .22 caliber charge holes. The 6" Model 617 (45 ozs.) outweighs a 4" Model 629.



Accuracy from a box-stock 6" was excellent, averaging .71" at 25 yards. Only 1X though, with all the signs of a flinch. Must have been the wrist-crushing recoil of those Mini-Mags.

advantage over the 4" and a definite weight advantage over the 51 oz., 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " version. I chose the six shooter over the 10-shot variation because of availability.

My self-improvement program consisted of shooting the NRA Short Course over and over again. I shot the slow fire target single-action and used double-action for timed and rapid fire. My earliest efforts at double-action bullseye shooting produced a few wild shots out on the edge of the 25 yard centers. After a bit of practice, I managed a few scores in the low-to-mid 90s and produced a 286/300 8X timed fire fairly early in the process.

By the time the 617 had digested 1,200 rounds, my double-action scores were consistently in the middle 90s and I was shooting well within the established time allotment for both timed and rapid sequences.

The modern K-Masterpiece retains all

the finer points of the earlier models. It also presents a number of up-to-date improvements. While I questioned the utility of a heavy, fully lugged barrel, it does seem to add steadiness during double-action shooting. The extra weight did not cause fatigue during long practice sessions.

Active shooters have come to prefer the smooth target trigger to the grooved version of earlier models. It proves to be quite user-friendly for both single and double action shooting. The drilled and tapped top strap allows for rapid interchangeability between the stock iron sights and the full range of optics.

Not only does this add years to the shooting lives of visually-challenged shooters of mature years, but also it demonstrates that the people at 2100 Roosevelt Avenue are not afraid to let the shooting public find out just how accurate these revolvers can be.



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Dave Lauck is not exactly a Johnny-come-lately to the gunsmithing profession. His family has been involved in the gunsmithing business in America since 1750! Dave's shop, D&L Sports, is an established leader in the tactical firearms and training arena. D&L specializes in premium-quality 1911-style autos, precision-tuned Remington and Nesika bolt-actions, Browning Hi-Powers, Ruger MKIIs, Vaqueros, Bisleys and 10-22 rifles, Remington 870 shotguns, Smith & Wesson revolvers, as well as custom AR Sporter rifles. D&L firearms can be customized to client specifications, or provided as custom packages, depending on individual client needs.

Dave is the sole gunsmith at D&L Sports. It is not a production-line shop for one simple reason: quality control. It is not the goal of D&L Sports to be the biggest custom shop. D&L's goal is to be the best. Dave is a formally trained and certified armorer, with over 25 years of experience in special-purpose firearms. He is a staff member and writer for *Tactical Shooter* and *American Gunsmith* magazines. He has authored three books: *Tactical Marksman*, *Tactical 1911* and *Practical Pistol*.

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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.

SIXGUNNER

Continued from page 48

tion Colt SAA .44 Special with a 7½" barrel on a link to Tom's site. The gun was for sale at a very reasonable price. It turned out to be offered by a friend of mine in Missouri, so I purchased it without hesitation. Happily, it was also in better shape than advertised.

However, it did have one major problem for me, and that was the fact that the front sight had been filed down and was now placing my 250 gr. .44 Special bullets about 6" high at 25 yards. So, off it went to Sargis to build up the front sight blade. That seemed like too little work to have done when paying the extortion fees now required by UPS for shipping handguns, so we added an action job, one-piece walnut grips and, to complete the project, Kelye Schlepp of Belt Mountain Enterprises sent over one of his new #5 base pins with an Elmer Keith-designed head.

There is something almost sensuous about cocking the hammer on a properly tuned Colt, and Sargis creates that feeling with his action job. The action is smooth, the cylinder locks up tightly with very little play, the trigger pull is light and crisp, the re-cut forcing cone aids accuracy, and the one-piece walnut

stocks and #5 Belt Mountain cylinder base pin complete a sixgun package that is near perfect.

I could not let my discovery stop there. So when I found a Second Generation New Frontier— a .45 with a 4¾" barrel— at Chapel's, off went the barrel and a 5½" .357 Magnum New Frontier to Sargis to make it into one of my favorite sixgun types, a bigbore packin' pistol.

Sargis once again tuned the action, set the trigger pull at 3½ lbs., installed the new barrel, re-cut the forcing cone and re-chambered the original .357 cylinder to .45 Colt. Another #5 base pin from Belt Mountain completed this project. This sixgun also shoots like a dream.

A Special Project

The old saying is that good things come in threes, so, to complete the picture, Sargis was called on to perform a most special function. For a long time now, I have been planning to do a total custom package on a Colt SAA, beginning with a New Frontier as the basic platform. The starting point would be a good-shootin' .44 Special with an action that is both tight and smooth.

Enter Sargis. Anyone who has had much experience with Third Generations and New Frontiers knows that the quality of these beautiful sixguns can be anywhere from excellent to very second-rate.

My Third Generation 5½" .44 Special fell somewhere in the middle of the two extremes. It shot well enough, but the action was rough, and the cylinder was quite loose. Actually, it is surprising that it shot so well.

Off it went to Sargis with instructions to tune, smooth and, above all, take as much play as possible out of the cylinder. The result is probably one of the finest Colt New Frontiers in existence!

Tom fitted an oversize bolt that removes all perceptible play, both side-to-side and fore-and-aft, in the .44 cylinder. The beginning of this project turned out so well that it has caused a major problem. I am a great believer in "Don't Fix What Ain't Broke," and this sixgun ain't broke. The beginning of this project may also be the end, as I do not believe I really want to use it as a platform for a custom sixgun since it performs so well.

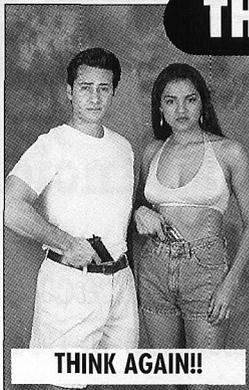
I think I am going to have to find another New Frontier for the future project. Thanks, Tom, for causing  such a pleasant problem.

Readers can reach Tom Sargis at Bozeman Trail Arms Mfg., Dept AH, 28 Lake Dr., Livingston, MT 59047; phone (406) 223-1111; website: www.ycsi.net/users/gunsmith. I recommend his work highly and without any reservation. He understands single-action sixguns and sixgunners perfectly.

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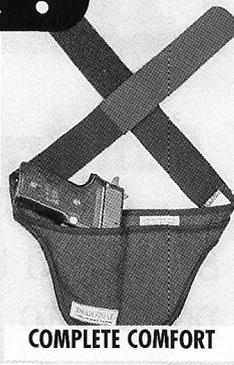
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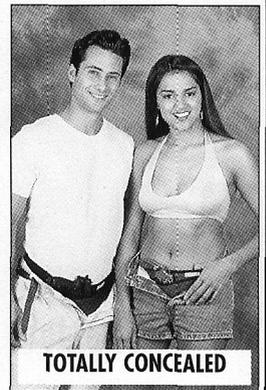
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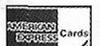
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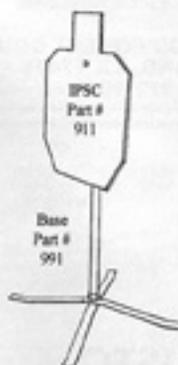
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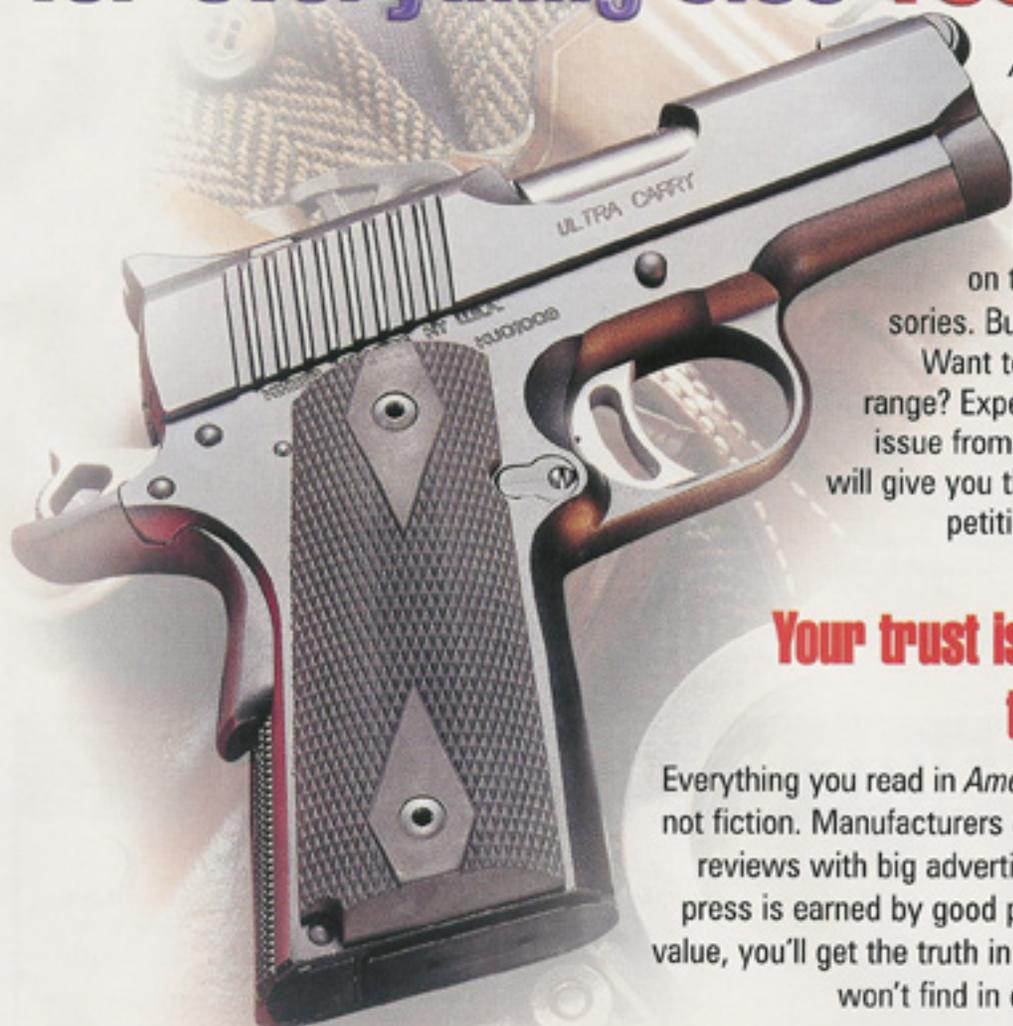
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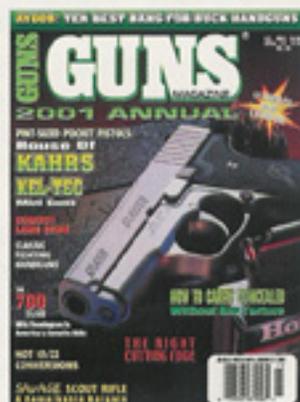
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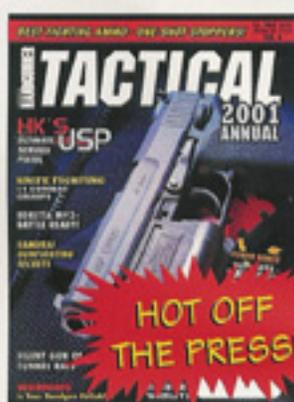
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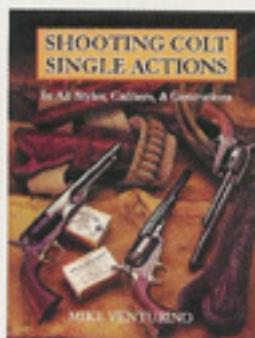
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ADD IT UP

16,000,000

Guns manufactured by Sturm, Ruger & Co. during William B. Ruger Sr.'s 50-year tenure as chairman

50,000

Dollars invested by partners Alexander Sturm and Bill Ruger, in 1949, to form Sturm, Ruger & Co.

213,000,000

Dollars, in sales, of Sturm, Ruger & Co. in 1999

0

Years that Sturm, Ruger & Co. failed to turn a profit since 1949

4,000

Slightly used demos and discontinued models that S&W quietly put on the market for 20% below distributor price

304,740

Rifles and shotguns made by Marlin Firearms in 1997, according to ATF, making the lever-gun manufacturer the third biggest rifle maker (behind Remington and Ruger)

18,000

9mm rounds per second—yes, second—that a new six-barrel gun, named Bertha, can fire. Developed by Aussie inventor James O'Dwyer, Bertha is being researched by the military as a "better mousetrap" than the Phalanx

Continued from page 114

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Fifty years ago, William B. Ruger Sr. founded a gun company with his partner, Alexander Sturm. It was called Sturm, Ruger & Co. Ruger was the idea man, and Sturm was the organizational man. They chipped in \$50,000 to get the company off the ground. Sturm died soon thereafter and Ruger, in honor of his friend, forever changed the company's logo, a stylized eagle, from red to black.

What color now for the proud Ruger raptor, now that Ruger has stepped down? On Oct. 24, 2000, Ruger relinquished the reins to his oldest son, William B. Ruger Jr., and handed the company on to the next generation. Bill Junior has been with Sturm, Ruger & Co. since 1964, so he has certainly seen the best and worst of times for the gun business. Bill Junior will serve as chairman and CEO. He will be assisted by Steve Sanetti, Ruger's longtime general counsel. Erle Blanchard got the nod for the job of president, COO and treasurer.

What does the future hold for Ruger's company? The answer is already plainly stated in the newspaper, every day. The company's stock has been pounded, driven down by a combination of the unattractiveness of the gun market and, ironically, by Ruger's diversification. When Callaway Golf curtailed orders to Ruger's Pine Tree Casting division, the stock went south. Fast.

Still, Sturm, Ruger & Co. enjoys vigorous gun sales, even in a declining marketplace. They have innovative manufacturing methods and visionary new products. Ruger was himself the father of most of those new product ideas.



What's New For 2001

Gun companies like fanfare to accompany the unveiling of their new models. Most of them choose to ring bells and beat drums during the annual SHOT Show, the largest trade show of the shooting industry with over 470,000 sq. ft. of exhibit space. Even though this is being written a month before the show, we managed a few glimpses of some of the new guns.

Kimber will debut a new dedicated 10-round 1911 featuring a double-stack magazine and a shortened grip frame.

Remington will introduce a titanium-action version of the Model 700, along with a new "entry level" deer

rifle called the Model 710.

Para-Ordnance will bring forth a single-stack version of their DA-only double-stacker.

Ruger will spotlight a new chambering for the Super Redhawk, the .480 Ruger. This is basically a .475 Linebaugh Light, propelling a 250 gr. slug at 1,360 fps (a .475 Linebaugh pushes a 370 gr. sledgehammer to 1,500 fps).

Steyr will trot out a compact version, in .45 ACP no less, of their M Series. It will be called the S Series.

Taurus will chamber the .45 ACP in its Millennium pistol, which features a titanium slide and polymer frame.

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Spare us multi-purpose products in general, holsters in particular. We prefer task-specific tools—one thing tailor-made precisely to perform one job, and do it extremely well.

But the Wilson Adjuster is the Leatherman of holsters. The Adjuster is, surprisingly, a versatile holster that accommodates a wide range of pistols without compromising function or design.

The Adjuster has two adjustment screws. The main adjustment screw con-

trols a plastic roller which contacts the portion of the pistol just in front of the trigger guard. This regulates the tension of the holster on the pistol. The second

adjustment screw is at the bottom of the Adjuster and allows the fore and aft "rock" of the pistol to be dialed in.

We tested it with a Browning. The Adjuster wrapped around our Hi-Power as if it had been specially made just for that gun. We then inserted a Kimber, twirled the adjustment screws and, viola, a perfect 1911 fit.

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THE SMART HOLSTER

While Colt, SIG and Smith & Wesson were getting all the headlines over their efforts to build a “smart gun”— not to mention cushy government R&D grants— little ole **Michaels Of Oregon** was busy building a holster that scans an officer’s fingerprint and only releases the gun to the authorized user.

Known as the Pro-4 ID, the holster features a small “finger socket” on its outer body, positioned where a user would naturally place his trigger finger during the draw-stroke. As the finger enters the pocket, it trips an infrared sensor that switches on a fingerprint reader. The reader generates an image of the inserted finger and compares it against a pre-programmed memory of authorized prints. Up to 64 different prints can be stored in each Pro-4 ID so the officer can use multiple fingers from each hand to access the weapon, and other authorized people (such as his partner, his sergeant, an armorer, whoever) can be allowed access too.

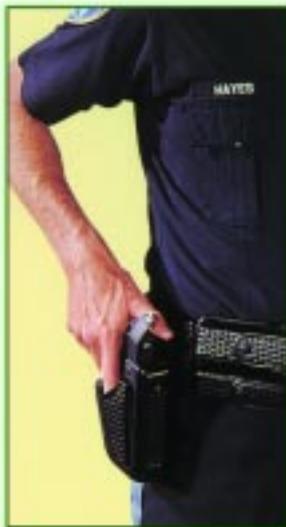
A microprocessor that’s connected to the reader tells the lock to release the pistol if it determines that there is a match between the stored prints and the finger in the pocket.

The lock holding the gun in the holster is infallible. There is no way, short of metal shears and a crowbar, to get the gun out once the electronic lock is in place. Which brings up a question: What if there is a malfunction or the batteries go dead?

“The holster has a backup power supply and a mechanical override,” said John French, a senior engineer at Uncle Mike’s and one of the developers of the Pro-4 ID. “Our patent application covers three different override designs, and our production holsters will most likely use a handcuff key system to open the biometric holster in the case of an emergency.” As to exactly how it works— in keeping with the industry practice of not detailing such things in a newsstand magazine— French would say no more.

French, who formerly worked for Smith & Wesson, did say that the holster quickly became the focus of the recently held International Association Of Chiefs Of Police (IACP) show, where Michael’s “smart holster” was the most-talked-about new product.

Right now, the Pro-4 ID biometric holster is expensive and the pre-production models shown at the show were somewhat bulky. “Hey, welcome to the world of electronics. As we continue to refine the technology— production models are slated for mid-year— the price will come down and the electronics will



get smaller,” French said. “We’re doing things now that we only dreamed of several years ago when the project was begun. The important things to focus on, though, are not the negatives, but the positives. This is a break-through design!”

He’s right. For the first time, a peace officer has a totally secure holster that is not dependent on some convoluted, super-precise draw-stroke that only Tommy Campbell can perform at speed. French believes that, “Uncle Mike’s is now the industry leader in the high-tech police holster race— and the others won’t be catching up for some time.”

One of the most amazing things about the Pro-4 ID is its ability to work under all conditions— cold, hot, wet, dry, a cut finger, a burned finger. “Because the holster is not taking a picture of the print, but is actually plotting recognition points across the surface of the finger, it can read through dirt and blood and even disregard minor cuts and still decide if the finger attempting to open the holster belongs to an authorized individual,” French said.

Why was Uncle Mike’s able to develop a fingerprint-scanning holster when gun companies that were given millions of tax dollars couldn’t even get a working prototype of a “smart gun”? Recoil and heat, in a nutshell. Holsters don’t recoil or belch gunsmoke onto sensitive electronics.

Next up, smart bullets that only hit criminals.



Industry Insider

by Cameron Hopkins

Mr. Shultz Goes To Tennessee

Ed Shultz, the president of **Smith & Wesson** who made the fateful decision to sign the “agreement” with the Clinton White House, is no longer the president of the world’s second largest handgun manufacturing company. Shultz had been serving simultaneously as president of two companies owned by **Tomkins plc**: Murray Inc., a lawn mower company from Tennessee, and S&W. Tomkins recently divested themselves of Murray, and with it went Shultz.

The new president is a longtime veteran of the vicissitudes of Smith & Wesson. George C. Colclough, a 25-year employee of S&W, is a lawyer and served as vice president of administration prior to his promotion. He is a Vietnam vet who served with the 1st Cavalry Division. He was Ranger-qualified and worked as an infantry officer on active duty from 1968 to 1975 before retiring from the Army Reserve as a bird-colonel.

What does this mean for Smith & Wesson and, more importantly, for the shooting industry? It means stability at the helm of a company reeling from the swaying deck of an industry in transition and staggering in the face of an uncertain future. Colclough must deal with the implementation of the “agreement”—S&W never has sent out “agreement-based” contracts to its dealers and distributors, despite what “promises” were allegedly made—and then he must rebuild the good reputation the company once enjoyed among its loyal customers.

Smith & Wesson’s products are better than ever—the quality coming out of 2100 Roosevelt Avenue has never been higher. Their handle on titanium, scandium and other forms of high-tech metallurgy is second to none. They are poised to take advantage of

the new-found consumer demand for classic firearms that the company tapped with the Schofield.

That well runs deep; S&W could dip into the nostalgia tank with ease. A Triple Lock out of the Performance Center? You bet! Do we even want to talk about Registered Magnums or maybe a Russian?

The other end of Colclough’s “Things To Do” list is not so easy. S&W still doesn’t have a suitable pistol for law enforcement. You can lead a cop to water, but you can’t make him buy a Sigma. (You might be able to get him to throw it *in* the water, however.) Smith & Wesson’s distribution network ain’t what it used to be, back when Ruger was so scared of them that they threatened to cut off *their* distributors if they sold any Smiths. Ruger is now so unafraid of S&W’s distribution that they rescinded their “ban” on Smiths.

Smith & Wesson needs a good .22 auto. The Model 41 is too expensive in today’s market, and their Sport series of plinkers just doesn’t have that *je ne sais quoi* like the Ruger Mk. II. Smith & Wesson needs a 1911. Old Slab Sides is such a pure American classic that the question shouldn’t be *if* Smith will make one, but *when*. Colclough has a Herculean task ahead of him in cleaning up Smith & Wesson, but my inside sources say that he is just the man for the job.



SHORT SHOTS

■ **The Marlin Firearms Co.**, has acquired the assets of **H&R 1871**, the world’s largest manufacturer of single-shot, break-top shotguns and rifles. The new company, known as H&R 1871 Llc, will include the brand names Harrington & Richardson, New England Firearms and Wesson & Harrington.

■ **American Arms**, the Missouri-based importer of such lines as **Franchi** shotguns and **Uberti** revolvers, has been sold to Tristar Ltd. Sporting Arms, another Show Me State importer.

■ Bill Wilson of **Wilson Combat** has bought the entire assets of his eponymous company from his ex-wife. The company had been jointly owned prior to their divorce.

■ **Springfield Armory** and **Kimber** are both introducing “safer” 1911 pistols in 2001. Kimber is fitting all of its models with a passive firing pin block safety that does *not*—repeat, not—adversely affect the trigger pull, a Kimber spokesman emphatically emphasized. Springfield Armory is incorporating a “key lock” on its line of 1911s to prevent unauthorized use.

■ Magnum rifle cartridges are seeing their greatest level of factory-initiated innovation since the decade from ’54 to ’64, the “golden years” of cartridge design. (Just name the round. It probably came from that decade—.223, .308, .300 Win. Mag., .44 Magnum, .458 Win. Mag., 7mm Rem. Mag. We could go on.) **Remington** is at the forefront of the new

slate of magnums with their Ultra Mag family of .404 Jeffrey-based cases. These are what magnums should be—non-belted powerhouses that consume massive amounts of smokeless powder and propel 250 gr. sledgehammers with the same trajectory as a .22-250. Think we’re exaggerating? We’re not.

■ **Korth**, the German handgun maker renowned for making a \$2,500 revolver that didn’t shoot as well as a \$250 Dan Wesson, has gone out of business. The company also made a \$4,000 semiauto pistol that shot about like a Gold Cup, which is to say, it didn’t. Color us surprised that there were enough Tootsie Pop consumers out there to keep Korth going as long as it did.

Continued on page 112

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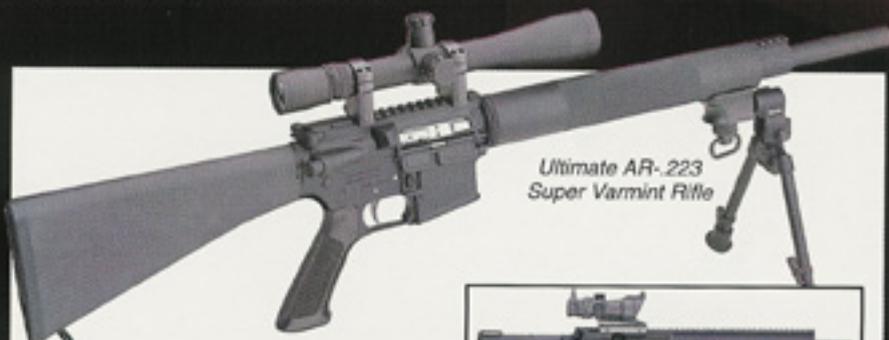
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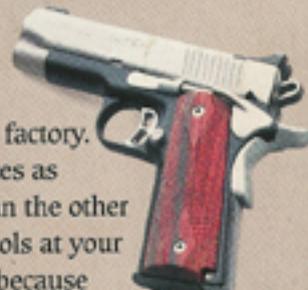
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