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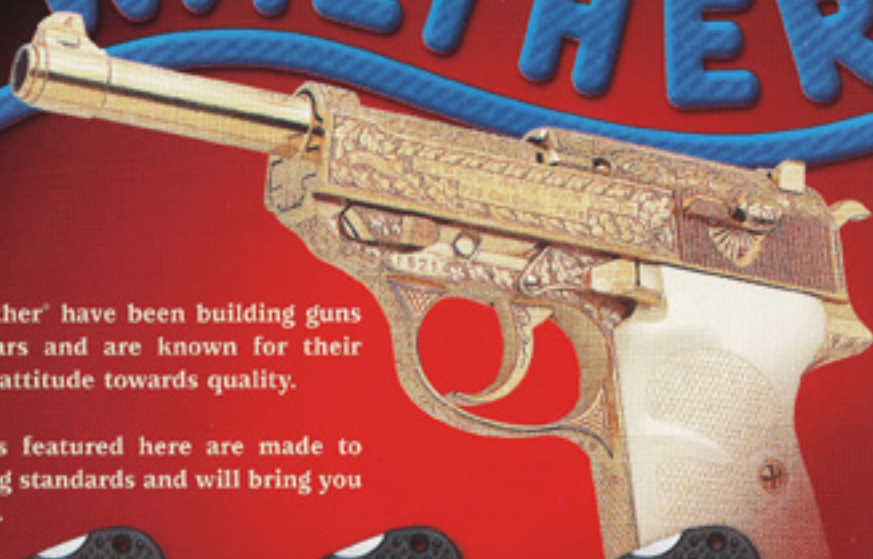
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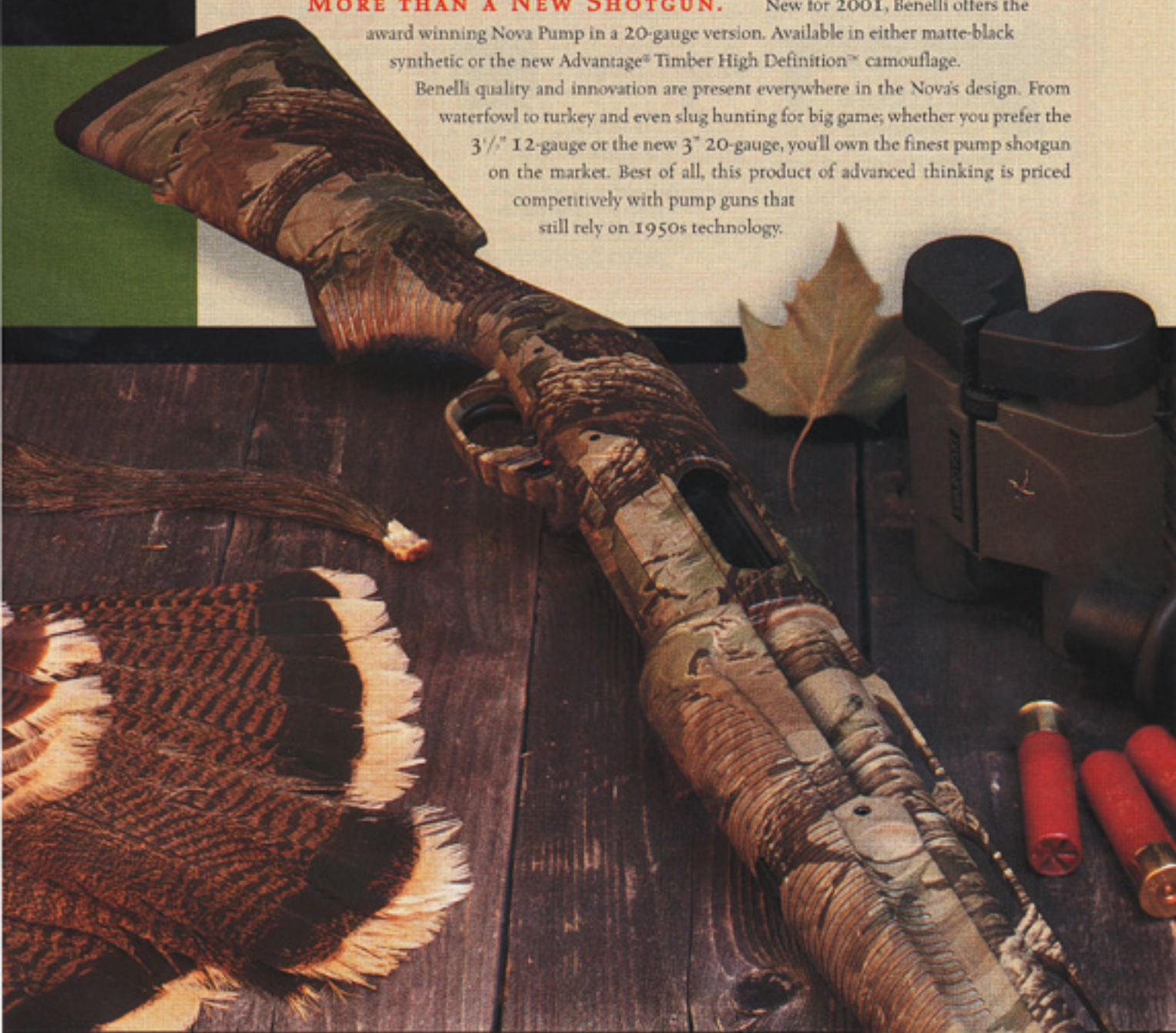
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PUBLISHER

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Cameron Hopkins

EDITOR Scott Farrell
ed@gunsmagazine.com

ART DIRECTOR Joseph R. Novelozo

ART ASSISTANT Richard Stahlhut

ASSISTANT EDITOR Jennifer Rogers Kramer

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT Jessica Applegate

ADVERTISING PRODUCTION Linda Peterson

ADVERTISING SALES Hollis Grdina

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR Ichiro Nagata

SHOOTING EDITOR Dave Anderson

HANDGUN EDITOR Massad Ayoob

SHOTGUN & HUNTING EDITOR Holt Bodinson

AIRGUNS EDITOR J.I. Galan

HANDLOADING EDITOR Charles E. Petty

FIELD EDITORS Sam Fadala, Roy Huntington

SPECIAL PROJECTS EDITOR Tom Turpin

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ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Denny Fallon

National Adv. Offices:
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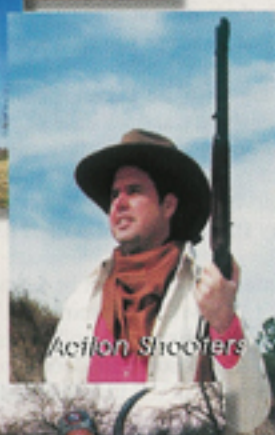
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LETTER OF THE MONTH



GUNS MAGAZINE MAY 2000

Offended By Snipers

I found your coverage of the sniper match in Arizona very distasteful on several different levels. ("World Sniper Championship" GUNS March '01.) First, I'd like to know if the law enforcement "snipers" were shooting at targets of women holding babies or 10-year-old children? With the numerous debacles involving FBI and BATF "snipers" in the past few years, I would think the shooters at the event would want to practice their skills at target recognition, not marksmanship.

Second, I was disgusted to see the team from Singapore being so prominently mentioned. In a country where the citizens are completely disarmed and the police are allowed to employ terrorist tactics like warrantless raids and forced confessions, I would think we would be fighting against the "snipers," not training them to be better shots.

I fully support the tools and tactics of legitimate law enforcement, but these guys inhabit that gray area between police and gestapo. Please avoid printing articles like this in the future and stick with features which make us all proud to be part of the American tradition of gun ownership.

Alan Greene
Birmingham, Ala.

Rush Was Right

During his January 17, 2001 radio broadcast, Rush Limbaugh read an excerpted quote from Democratic Senator Hubert Humphrey, which originally ran in the February 1960 issue of GUNS Magazine. Due to many requests, we are happy to re-print that quote in its entirety.

"Certainly one of the chief guarantees of freedom under any government, no matter how popular and respected, is the right of citizens to keep and bear arms. This is not to say that firearms should not be very carefully used, and that definite safety rules of precaution should not be taught and enforced. But the right of citizens to keep and bear arms is just one more guarantee against arbitrary government, one more safeguard against a tyranny which now appears remote in America, but which historically has proved to be always possible."

It is interesting to note that Senator Humphrey was a celebrated liberal, who went on to win the Democratic presidential nomination in 1968.

The Editor

The Whole Dram Mess

In his "Handloader" column of March 2001, Charles Petty states that the dram is still used in shotshells. That is not entirely true and could be misleading. The dram may be used by some blackpowder shooters, but is not used as a direct measurement by most. It should not be used in loading modern powders.

The dram equivalent is still used to describe a velocity equivalent to the same load of blackpowder in drams. However, the dram itself is not used by modern ballisticians. Winchester is even abandoning the dram equivalent for velocity figures in their newest target loads. I would not be surprised to see others follow, as the dram equivalent is a concept many shooters do not understand in full.

The Handbook For Shooters And Reloaders by P.O. Ackley states, "All modern shotshell powders, with the exception of DuPont Bulk, must be loaded by grain weight, never to dram equivalent." Other reloading manuals are equally careful in this matter.

J.L. Roberts

Firearm and Toolmark Examiner
JR_N6XTJ@ix.netcom.com

The Boy's Room

My husband is a physician and a captain in the U.S. Army, but he's still a boy at heart. Our computer room is his room, and it is decorated with laminated pictures from your magazine and from American Handgunner. He considers both of these magazines to be respectable due to your well-written articles and high-quality pictures. Needless to say, this room reeks of testosterone!

Darla Redger
Augusta, Ga.

Hidden Costs In Canadian Gun Ownership

In the "Doin' The Numbers" section of the Feb. 2001 issue, the \$60 license fee is only part of the cost that Canadians must pay to obtain a license to own a gun. As of January 1, 2001, all persons applying for this license must either take a course in firearms at a cost of \$100 or more, or, for \$25, would-be gun owners can challenge the course. Given this, the correct cost for a gun license is \$85 if the course is successfully challenged, or \$160 if you take the course.

This fee only applies to non-restricted firearms. The cost for restricted firearms is \$80 plus the course or challenge fees. You cannot take a non-restricted course and then apply for a restricted license. You have to take both courses.

Restricted firearms are long guns with a barrel length of 18.5", or a total length of 26" if the firearm can be folded. Handguns are classified as restricted, and if the barrel is shorter than 4.13", they are classified as prohibited and can only be owned by persons who owned them prior to Feb. 14, 1995. All .25 and .32 calibers are also considered prohibited.

Of course all criminals will get these licenses and will register their firearms.

Barrie Goodwin
Victoria, B.C., Canada
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Errata

In the March 2001 "Handloader" column, it was stated that 1 oz. is equivalent to 43.75 grains. This is incorrect — 1 oz. is equivalent to 437.5 grains. GUNS apologizes for this error and reminds readers that it is always important to check loading data in the manufacturers' loading manuals before handloading any ammunition.

GUNS MAGAZINE™ welcomes letters to the editor for "Crossfire." Send your letters to: CROSSFIRE, GUNS Magazine, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108. Email: ed@gunsmagazine.com

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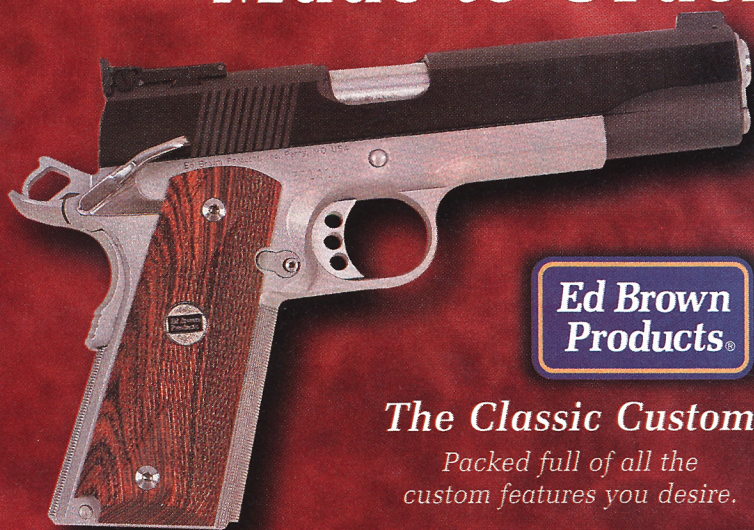
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continued from page 10

House Clearing With Ayoob

Massad Ayoob's informative articles are one reason I read *GUNS Magazine* cover-to-cover. His recent advice on home security ("Fortress America," *GUNS*, Jan. '01) struck home as I recently carried out a "house-cleaning scenario" at 2 a.m. following a false alarm at my house. I didn't realize the folly in this action until I read the article. I hope to attend one of his LFI courses at some future date to gain the insight necessary in such situations.

Richard Ruggieri
esiinc@pol.net

The 1911 & The Condition Three Dilemma

In a recent edition of *GUNS Magazine*, Ayoob asserted that cocking a 1911 Colt .45, which is in so-called "Condition Three," requires two hands and "that is why most serious shooters avoid" using the weapon in this condition ("Handguns," Feb. '01).

A traditional, government-style 1911 Colt can have the slide moved rearwards, a round chambered and the hammer cocked with one hand. This is achieved by holding the gun in the shooting hand and pushing the lower part of the front-end slide on a hard or semi-hard surface, such as a counter-top or the edge of a doorframe. This cannot be done with a "modern" weapon fitted with a full-length guide rod for the slide return spring.

Paul Gilmour
Tucson, Ariz.

The Mythical 10mm Auto Rim

I found Taffin's article, "The Wildcat .41 Special" (*GUNS*, Feb. '01) very interesting. My own approach to this type of round would be a bit different. I would opt for a .40 version. I would like to see a 10mm Auto Rim and/or a .40 Auto Rim.

These would be just as easy to reload and would take the .40 bullet as opposed to the .41. The 10mm AR would be loaded to about .38 to .40 WCF velocity and could be used in revolvers chambered for the 10mm Auto.

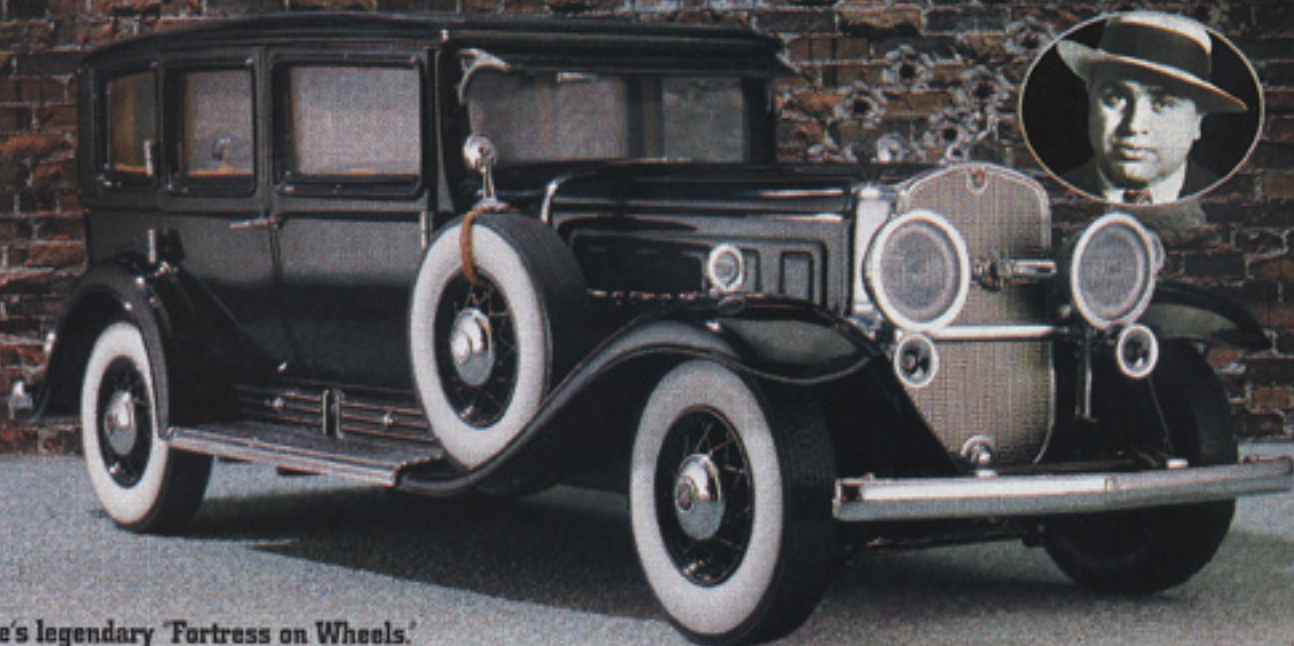
Wouldn't it be nice to own a Colt Python in such a caliber? The Python is on the old Official Police .41 frame, so it ought to take either a .40 or .41 cartridge. I think the official Police Colt was chambered at one time for the .41 Colt.

Frank Horn
Safford, Ariz.



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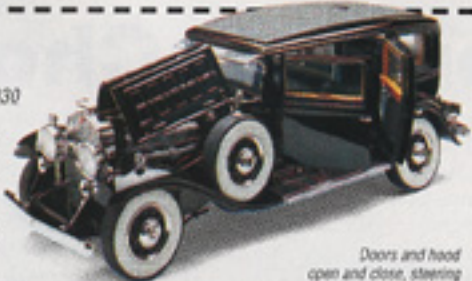
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The SHOOTER'S Blade

In the “tactical training community,” a “tactical knife” on the order of a Spyderco or Emerson is as standard an item of garb as a lawyer’s necktie, but much more functional. It’s not just part of the image, it’s part of the defense plan.

If you’re a handgun hunter, choosing the right knife is easy: hunting handgun, plus a hunting knife. Duh. You can, of course, accessorize. I like to back up my .44 Mag. with a 2” .22 Kit Gun for *coup de grace* shots that immediately end suffering without damaging a trophy. Similarly, you want your big camp knife backed up with a small, handy skinner and maybe a folder for utility chores. In places where there is no room service, a Swiss Army Knife is never inappropriate.

It’s coming into vogue in some circles to carry

the handgun on the dominant side and the knife opposite, so if you have to defend yourself against a disarming attempt, you can use the support hand to cut the attacking limb. I understand the rationale, but that would be about third down on my list of logical weapon retention strategies, behind a simple physical leverage technique to rip the offender’s hand off the weapon.

My department issues the Masters of Defense automatic folder designed by Mike Janich. (Knife-smart cops never say “switchblade” unless they’re arresting you for illegally carrying *yours*. No one here ever told you life was fair.)

In a gun-retention scenario, the knife is an emergency fallback—it’s far from being Plan A unless you have neither backup handgun nor handgun retention skills.

The GUN And The KNIFE

Gun people tend to be knife people. It isn’t a “weapons thing” so much as it is an appreciation of art in steel combined with a recognition of critical utility.

I carry a gun damn near all the time, except on commercial aircraft, when swimming, and when in the shower. I carry a knife everywhere but the shower.

In the swimming pool, there’ll be a Spyderco Police Model with 3⅞” serrated edge clipped in the waistband of my trunks. I remember a report of a child who drowned when a swimming pool intake pipe caught his towel around his neck, and no one could cut him free in time.

On commercial flights, no one has had a problem with my two sub-3” straight-edge folding knives that accompany my SureFire 6P flashlight.

Many people carry knives *and* guns. Though normally functioning as a utility tool, the knife can be an effective close-quarters backup weapon if you know what you’re doing with it. Only in a Rambo movie, however, would you have a situation where you chose the knife over the gun to defend yourself against a threat that warranted the use of deadly force.

Highlighting the importance of a knife in personal defense, the National Tactical Invitational, a competition known for personal-defense situations, auctioned off this etched Tim Wegner tactical folder by Spyderco.



The author designed this Razorback knife for the Masters of Defense project as a knife to carry when not carrying a gun.



A World Of Choices

Lacking a bayonet mount, how does one “mate” the handgun and the knife. Identical bone handles? These might be more show than go. Rubbery Pachmayr or Hogue grips on the sidearm, and a Kraton handle on the supplemental Colt Steel Tanto? In practical terms, that may make more sense, especially in inclement weather.

If you carry a .25 auto, should your backup be an Exacto knife? If you carry a .454 Casull in the woods, is a Kukri knife the proportional companion? Sadly, Miss Manners has never addressed this issue, and we still have much to learn.

There are things to avoid. Don’t carry your fixed-blade sheath knife right next to your spare pistol magazines. How do I know this? One day I was speedloading my .45, and I was almost to the magazine well when I realized the magazine didn’t feel right. I stopped, with the point of the drawn knife about a tenth of an inch from the gun butt and the heel of my palm. I moved the knife sheath to another location.

The bottom line is simple. Guns are cool. Knives are cool. If we’re discreet and responsible, we should be able to carry whatever guns and knives we choose.



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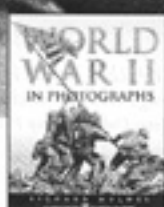
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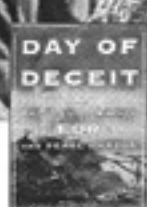
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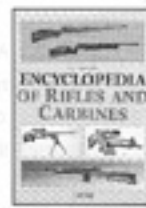
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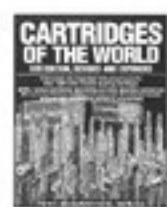
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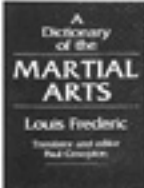
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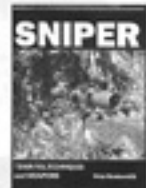
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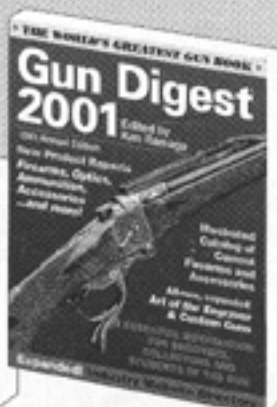
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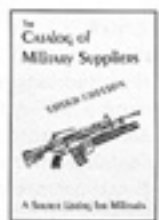
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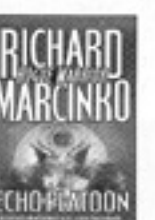
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The Long And Short Of Rifle Actions

There's no industry standard on just what constitutes "short" and "long" actions. Most bolt-action rifle manufacturers make at least two lengths, some three; Sako bolt actions come in four lengths to suit different cartridges.

American manufacturers seem to designate short actions as ones that will accept cartridges up to 2.8" in overall length, and long actions as ones that will accept cartridges up to 3.4". By this definition, short-action cartridges would include the .308 family. Long action cartridges would include the .30-'06 and its offspring, as well as magnums of similar length, such as the 7mm Rem. Mag. and the .300 and .338 Win. Magnums.

Typically, the receivers of short actions are 3/4" to 1" shorter than those of long actions. Since the bolt and magazine assembly are also shorter, weight is reduced by about 4 ozs.

Short actions are more rigid, enhancing accuracy. They are slightly faster to cycle, though not for the reason most people think. The actual extra distance the bolt travels in a long action is less than an inch, and since the bolt is moving fast while being cycled, the

difference in travel time is insignificant.

The reason aimed shots can be fired faster with a short action is that the shooter's head doesn't have to move. The face can remain on the stock and the eye on the sight picture as the bolt is cycled. With long actions, most shooters have to lift their heads from the stock so the bolt has room to operate. Shooters must then reacquire position and sight picture.



When reloading a long-action rifle, left, the shooter must lift his head, which gives the shorter action a speed advantage.

SHIFTING THE SHORT PARADIGM

Short actions make for rifles that are a bit lighter, a bit shorter, and slightly faster to cycle. Until recently, short cartridges have also had disadvantages. Although they are good cartridges, the .308 and 7mm-08 Rem. don't quite match the ballistics of their long-action counterparts, the .30-'06 and .280 Remington. Further, the short actions fall well short of the .300 Win. Mag. and 7mm Rem. Magnum. Now, Winchester, is proposing to change all that with the .300 WSM.

Winchester's first new rifle cartridge in 20 years, the .300 WSM, duplicates the per-

formance of the very popular .300 Win. Mag. (180 gr. at 2,960 fps), but in a short, fat case designed for short actions. The .300 WSM is a non-belted case with a magnum-size head and an overall length of 2.76". Factory ballistics are a 180 gr. bullet at 2,970 fps from a 24" barrel.

Benchrest competitors have proved that short, fat cartridges, such as the .22 PPC, ignite and burn powder with exceptional consistency and efficiency. All else being equal, they are more accurate and efficient than their long, slender counterparts, which

provide similar ballistic performance. The short, compact cases are also more efficient in that they use smaller powder charges to produce comparable velocities. Since the weight of the powder charge affects recoil, the more efficient case is more pleasant to shoot.

Weight of powder charge has more effect on recoil than most people realize. Assume a 150 gr. bullet is loaded to 2,800 fps in a .308 case using 42.8 grs. of powder. Recoil energy in an 8 lb. rifle would be 15.71 ft./lbs. Loading the same 150 gr. bullet to 2,800 fps in a .300 Win. Mag.

BOLT THROW FOR SELECTED RIFLES

Lee Enfield No. 1 Mk. III:	3.56"
Browning A-Bolt short:	3.625"
Remington 700 short:	4.00"
Remington 700 long:	4.875"
Winchester pre-'64 Model 70 .30-'06:	4.56"
Winchester Classic Model 70 .375 H&H:	4.75"

case takes more powder due to the bigger combustion chamber. Assuming a 63.3 gr. powder charge and an 8 lb. rifle, recoil energy is 21.12 ft./lb. Same bullet, same velocity, but the bigger powder charge means over 34 percent more recoil energy.

The .300 WSM case has roughly 10 percent less capacity than the .300 Win. Mag. case. It achieves the same factory ballistics with less powder, hence less recoil. The bigger case has the potential to be loaded hotter, and it has an advantage with heavier bullets that would have to be deep-seated in the .300 WSM case. However the experiences of thousands of hunters have demonstrated that 180 grs. at 3,000 fps is a superb combination of adequate power and tolerable recoil. Current super bullets such as the Barnes X-bullets, Nosler Partition, Swift A-Frame, Trophy Bonded and Winchester Fail Safe eliminate the need for heavier bullets.

The .300 WSM represents cartridge evolution rather than revolution. Short cartridges and short actions represent marginal, but real, improvements in hunting and shooting performance.



Designed for short actions, the .300 WSM (right) uses a short, fat case to duplicate the performance of the .300 Win. Mag. (left).



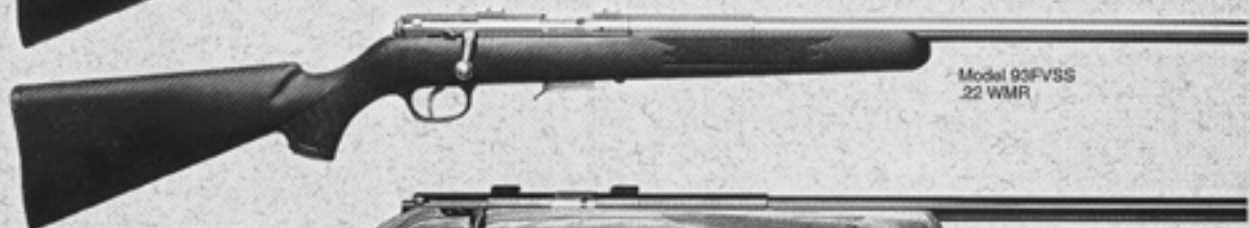
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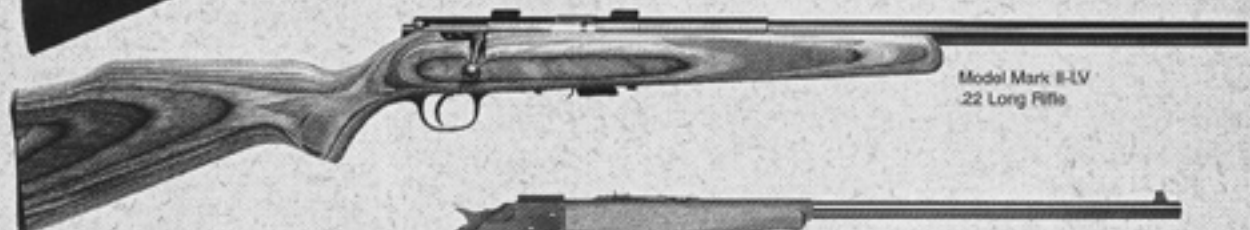
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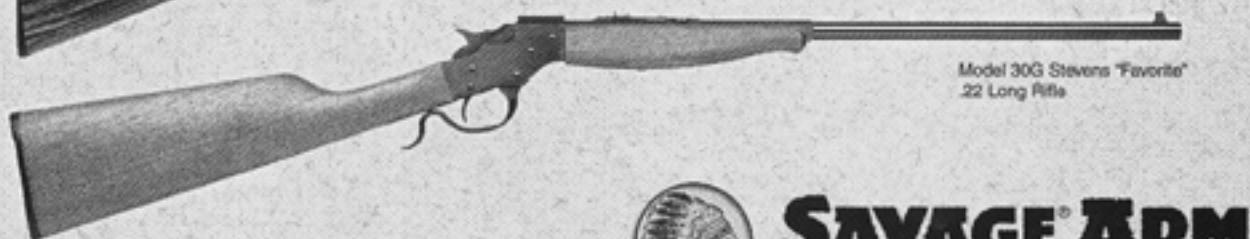
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SAVAGE ARMS
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The Model 94 .410: 107 Years In The Making

In what could be considered the most fascinating shotgun development of 2001, Winchester is fielding a Model 94 shotgun. That's right. After churning out approximately five million Model 94 lever action rifles, Winchester has taken John Browning's brilliant, 107-year-old design and converted it into a 10-shot, 2½" chambered .410 shotgun.

In looks, handling and feel, the Model 9410 incorporates those very qualities that have made the Model 94 a perennial favorite. Winchester's new lever action shotgun sports a 24" cylinder-bored barrel and weighs 6¼ lbs. Slip a shell in the chamber, and you can load another nine 2½" .410 shells through the loading port.

Like the current rifles, the Model 9410 is an angle eject. Since it's quite capable of kicking out those diminutive 410 ga. 1/5 oz. rifled slugs at 1,830 fps, the Model 9410 is fitted with a Truglo front sight and a shallow "V" adjustable rear sight.

The 2½" .410 chambering has always been an effective target and skeet combination with 1/2 oz. of #8s and #9s. When it

comes to hunting loads, the factories offer 1/2 oz. loadings in #4, #6 and #7½ shot. Velocities are right up there at 1,245 fps, but with only 1/2 oz. of shot to work with, patterns are going to be pretty thin beyond 25 yards. Field loads carrying #6s and #7½s will prove more effective than #4s, again because of better pattern density.

The Model 9410 will be a delight for informal family target shooting, even for family home defense. It should prove effective for cottontails and squirrels if ranges are kept short. As a utilitarian farm or ranch gun, it will be useful for vermin control when loaded with shot, slugs or American Derringer's "000" buckshot loads. It might even be approved in time for cowboy action shooting matches. John Browning would be proud. Suggested retail for the Model 9410 is \$531.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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www.winchester-guns.com



Winchester's fabled Model 94 .30-30 has been reincarnated as a 10-shot, .410 shotgun.

Life Jacket Shotgun Action Lock

Trigger locks or other security devices are becoming such a norm that one or another is usually packaged inside every new shotgun box. Some designs are practical and easy to use, some are not.

The "Life Jacket" is a security device that is finding favor in law enforcement circles and, due to its reasonable cost of approxi-

mately \$19.99, it's an excellent aftermarket accessory for any shotgun user.

The "Life Jacket" is a foam-lined, polycarbonate clamshell that locks around the open breech of most semi-automatic and pump shotguns. A polycarbonate plug inside the clamshell actually fits inside the ejection port. A stainless steel tumbler lock locks the Life Jacket in place.

The Life Jacket is quickly installed or removed, doesn't interfere with the portability of the gun, and is priced well.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

LIFE JACKET

(888) 800-0087

www.life-jacket.com



The Life Jacket shotgun action lock is simple, inexpensive and secure.

New Non-Toxic "HEVISHOT"

Expect to see a new non-toxic shot approved for the 2001 waterfowl season. Named "Hevishot," the shot is composed of a tungsten, nickel and iron alloy. Hevishot is heavier than lead, about as hard as steel, and will be priced somewhere between steel and other lead substitutes.

This past August, Claude Kinsler of Morristown, Tenn., used Hevishot to set a new world record during the NWTF Still Target World Championships by placing 42 pellets in a 3" circle at 40 yards. The winning factory load was 1½ oz. of buffered #6s in a 2½" Fiocchi case with a rolled crimp.

According to Jay Menefee of Polywad, who is loading the ammunition for Hevishot, Kinsler used a custom competition choke made by shotgunning gunsmith Randy Lewis, who, himself, went on to claim the title of Overall Championshooting Hevishot ammunition.

Hevishot pellets are slightly irregular in size and shape. Being very dense, Hevishot retains high pellet energy at long ranges, provides excellent penetration, and tends to produce very tight patterns. Hevishot #5s and #6s should be excellent turkey loads. At this time, the company recommends the use of steel-approved barrels and chokes only and no chokes tighter than modified.

Hevishot is produced by Environ-Metal of Sweet Home, Ore. The company is also working on the development of non-toxic, frangible bullets. We have already seen factory 2¾" cartridges featuring 3¼ dr. equivalent loadings of #2, #4, #6 and #7½ shot. It will take some time for Hevishot cartridges to make their way through the distribution system, so you should use their web-site to order.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

HEVISHOT/Environ-Metal

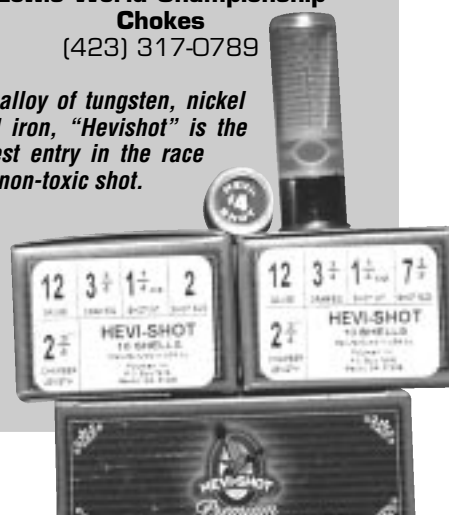
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22LR Practice kit

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.



92FS Brigadier Inox

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.



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Beretta

By Nick Sisley

DT10 TRIDENT

This premier Italian shotgun is destined to be the first classic O/U of the 21st century.



Above: Designed for serious competitors, the DT10 Trident is both beautiful and rugged. **Opposite top:** The DT10, along with its choke tubes, snap caps and accessories, comes in a hard-sided carrying case. **Opposite below l-r:** The trigger on the DT10 is adjustable for length of pull, and a second trigger is included for shooters who don't find the ergonomics of the standard model appealing. The DT10 has a cheek piece which is adjustable for both height and angle, allowing the shooter to position their head properly for any type of shooting.

Introduced for the new millennium, Beretta's DT10 Trident promises to be the flagship in their competition shotgun line. As company representative Don Campbell notes, this company has long wanted to offer competition shotguns at the highest level to compete with Krieghoff, Perazzi and the like.

Of course, Beretta has been no slouch in trap, skeet or sporting clays shotguns — with their 680 series of O/Us, as well as their now-discontinued AL 390 gas semi-auto. The AL 390 has become the preferred shotgun in many sporting clays tournaments, and its popularity has grown in skeet and trap circles, as well.

The 682 skeet, sporting and trap guns have been the Beretta flagship competition shotguns in the past, and they continue to be extremely popular with large numbers of shooters today. The 682 series has gained a great reputation for reliability and ease of maintenance, and the *feel* of these 682s has become almost legendary.

Building A Better Trap Gun

So why consider even bringing out a new, more expensive model? Beretta simply felt they could build a shotgun that was the equal of any made anywhere. So they went out to prove it.

The result is the DT10 Trident, with the DT standing for detachable trigger. The retail price of the DT10 Skeet model is \$9,450.

As with this company's SO series of fine O/Us, the DT10's receiver lock up is via a crossbolt on top. This type of system results in one of the strongest of all lock-up systems.

The top crossbolt lock up is augmented by a pair of



recesses on both sides of the receiver — which match up with lugs built into the ejectors on either side of the monobloc. The barrels hinge upon a common trunnion system.

The selective trigger can be moved back and forth appreciably. Just loosen the screw near the top of the trigger and slide it in the desired direction, then retighten the screw. The barrel selector is on top of the safety. The sides of the receiver have that sculptured look, somewhat similar to the 680 series Berettas.

The bluing is also very attractive — so deep it almost looks black. This is a departure from the many different types of finishes on the Beretta 680 series O/Us. Barrels are similarly well-done with deep, black bluing.

Under the forend, the barrels are separated. Forward of the forend, you'll see vented side panels. These allow for quicker cooling, though not as quick as would occur without side panels. The vent rib on top measures .383" in width. There's a metal bead at mid rib and a larger white bead near the muzzle. In the Spare Parts package, there are two additional front beads, both red, one larger than the other.

The Finest Features

The stock is of fairly massive proportions, compared to most of today's field gun stocks. This is most desirable on a competition shotgun; one that will be shot thousands of times a year. A larger, wider stock is easier on the cheek, plus it has more mass, and both these factors help to dampen felt recoil.

The pistol grip is very filling — read that as wide and ample. There's a swell on the right side to accommodate right-handed shooters. Some like relatively large pistol grips, claiming they provide more control of the gun.

The grip area is extensively hand-checkered, checkering that's well-done, though it's not too deep. There's even a diamond-shaped bit of checkering at the top of the stock, just behind the top tang.

Interestingly, the original Trident brochure depicts both the trap and skeet models with a Monte Carlo-style stock. Both are equipped with adjustable-comb stocks, but those original photos show the Monte Carlo look to both. The

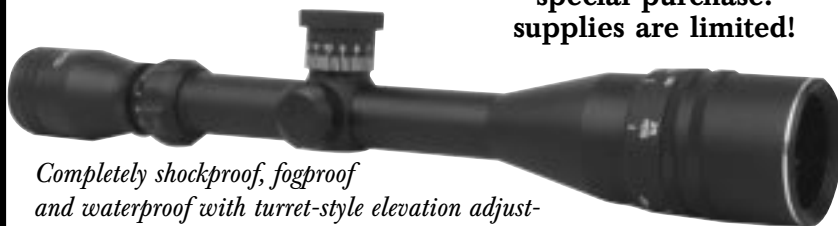
continued on page 26



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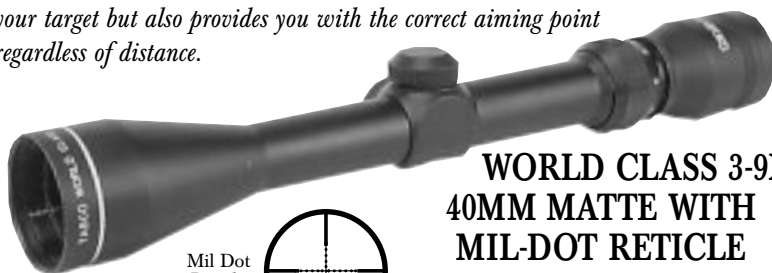


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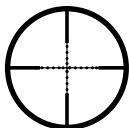
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BERETTA D10 TRIDENT continued from page 25

test gun, however, has an adjustable comb stock and comes straight back — no Monte Carlo. Evidently, all Skeet model DT10s feature a straight back — no Monte Carlo.

The Monte Carlo was designed so shooters would experience less felt recoil to the cheek, but the straight-line design of the DT10 can result in less recoil, too, as the straight comb allows the gun to come straight back, sort of passing up the cheek as it recoils.

A Custom Stock Fit

With many adjustable combs, you cannot make the front or rear of the comb higher or lower than the opposite end. But Beretta's design here is an excellent one, allowing the owner to vary comb height at the front and back, not just up and down and right and left. This feature allows the shooter to create his own straight-line comb.

By making the back of the adjustable comb higher than the front, there can be even less felt recoil to the face. However, the beauty of the straight-line comb is that your cheek stays at the same height in relation to the barrels, no matter where you place your cheek. Cheek placement easily changes, for example, when the shooter wears more or less clothing at the shoulder area. The adjustable comb also allows the shooter to easily adjust for point of impact. With very little experimentation, you can get point of impact exactly where you want it.

The safety lever definitely has a different shape, one that's said to ergonomically favor easy opening, as well as one that's supposed to also make it easier to open for left-handers. The forend has finger grooves and is larger than a Schnabel-style, but the DT10's forend is not overly large.

Lots of wrap-around checkering here. The checkering is fine too, at 24 lpi. A lever under the forend allows easy removal. With 28" barrels, the DT10 weighs 8 lbs. even. If this shotgun was rigged with Kolar or Briley skeet tube inserts, it would weigh just less than 9 lbs. Most competitive skeet experts are shooting guns of this weight — or more!

World-Class Shotgun

Do the DT10 barrels both print at the same place? We did some extensive testing to find out. Setting up the adjustable comb so the two beads on the rib were stacked, we began shooting patterns at 21 yards, first with the bottom barrel, then with the top. Both barrels had the same point of impact, and both were printing about 50 percent of the pellets above the marked aiming point, and 50 percent below. Just perfect!

In addition to thoughtful design and attention to accuracy, what other features allow the Trident to compete with the Krieghoffs and Perazzis of the world? One feature would be thicker receiver sides for added strength. Ditto for extractor size —

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these are "beefy" extractors.

The forend iron has a replaceable "block," which is treated for long-term wear, but easy replacement of this block means an always-tight fit — forend to barrels. There's a three-year warranty included. The "V" leaf trigger springs are massive, while trigger pulls are light, crisp and sure, and lock times are fast.

On a manual trigger-pull scale, we measured approximately 50 ozs. to let off the first barrel, 64 ozs. for the second.

In the spare parts kit, you'll find a wrench that makes changing the adjustable comb very easy. There's also a second trigger, in case you don't find the one that comes installed to be ergonomically perfect for you. A tiny screwdriver is also included to adjust the trigger back and forth.

The Skeet model DT10 comes with five extended screw-in chokes, two Skeet, one IC, one Mod and one IM. We checked both the barrels and the choke tubes with a Stan Baker Barrel Reader. The bore size of the barrels, dubbed Optima-Bore, measures .733". Beretta barrels not dubbed Optima-Bore tend to measure about .723", so that's .010" of "overboring."

The two Skeet choke constrictions measured .002" and .000"; the IC, .009"; the Mod, .017"; and the IM, .028".

The DT10 comes packed in a very attractive blue plastic case — which will offer excellent protection during transport to and from the range. Also included, in addition to the spare parts kit and choke set, are two snap caps and a long stock-changing wrench. (You only really need one snap cap, since the DT10 has inertia triggers.)

There are Trap and Sporting Clays models of the DT10, in addition to the Skeet model we tested. The Sporting version wears a two-tone matte silver finish. In Skeet, the option is 28" or 30" barrels; 28", 30" or 32" in Sporting; 30" or 32" in the Trap. There's also a 34" Trap Top Single, and a Trap Combo.

A Rugged Reality

This new Beretta O/U feels especially sturdy. It will be interesting to see if it will hold up to the thousands of rounds serious competition shooters will put through this shotgun year after year. Our guess is that this one is going to hold up very well.

The gun also feels good between the hands, points very well. Will it be as readily accepted as K-80 Krieghoffs in Skeet and Perazzi MX8s in Trap? Only time will tell. There is a place for it, but the number of serious competition shooters is relatively small. Surely this fine gun will find its way into the hands of a significant percentage of those serious competitors eventually.



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By John Taffin

These Finnish powders provide both versatility and outstanding performance for handgun hunters.



For many years reloaders had a very easy choice when deciding on powders. Bullseye was used for target loads, Unique for standard loads, and #2400 for heavy loads. Bullseye had been around since 1898, Unique came about two years later in 1900, and the relative newcomer #2400 arrived in 1932.

The latter began as the powder used mainly for the .22 Hornet and would prove to be exceptional when used in .357 Mag., heavy-loaded .44 Specials and, of course, the .44 Mag. when it arrived. These were the only tried-and-true powders available.

The days when two or three powders would handle all of our reloading chores are long gone. Sixgunners can now choose from well over six dozen powders, and if we factor in the single shot handguns, the choice goes to well over 100 applicable powders. Since the 1950s we have seen the advent of such useful powders as Winchester's 296, Hodgdon's H4227 and H110, a whole line of powders from Accurate Arms, many black powder substitutes, and powders from such new sources as RAMSHOT and Vihtavuori Oy.

While fairly new to American shooters, the Vihtavuori line of powders goes back more than 70 years. Vihtavuori produces the powder used in the very accurate Ely Tenex .22 rimfire ammunition. It is also used in what many consider the world's most accurate centerfire rifle ammunition, Sako's .22 and 6mm PPC cartridges. American manufacturers are even now starting to use Vihtavuori powders in several centerfire rifle cartridges.

For All Your Powder Needs

Vihtavuori powders are so named because they are manufactured in Vihtavuori, Finland. All of the canister-grade Vihtavuori powders are of the single base type and feature nitrocellulose as the main ingredient. While Vihtavuori produces over 50 different powders, so far only about a dozen rifle and handgun powders are available for reloaders in the United States.

Vihtavuori offers different powders for handgun applications. N310 is the fastest burning of the Vihtavuori powders available and is in the Bullseye and Accurate Arms #2 range. N320 is applicable to both shotguns and handguns with the burning rate similar to Red Dot.

For 9mm loading, N330 is similar to Green Dot and Accurate Arms #5. For reloaders partial to Unique, Vihtavuori offers N331. N340

continued on page 30

Ruger's Bisleys, chambered in .45 Colt and .44 Mag., are easy-packing hunting sixguns capable of taking advantage of the added performance of Vihtavuori powders.



Hard cast BRP bullets, including, from left, the 250 gr. and 290 gr. .44s and the 305 gr. .45, worked well when loaded over Vihtavuori powder.



Vihtavuori powder also works well with Nosler jacketed bullets, including, from left, the 150 gr. .357 and the .240 gr. and 300 gr. .44s.

VIHTAVUORI POWDERS HANDLOADS/JACKETED BULLETS:

LOAD	SIXGUN	VELOCITY	ACCURACY*
.357 Mag. Nosler 158 gr. JHP			
14.0 grs. VV N110	Freedom Arms 7½"	1,402 fps	1"
.41 Mag. Nosler 210 gr. JHP			
17.5 grs. VV N110	Freedom Arms 10½"	1,441 fps	1"
.44 Mag. Nosler 240 gr. JHP			
21.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,535 fps	1"
12.5 grs. VV N350	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,279 fps	1¼"
.44 Mag. Nosler 300 gr. JHP			
14.0 grs. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,095 fps	1¼"
10.8 grs. VV N350	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,126 fps	1"
11.0 grs. VV 3N37	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,120 fps	1¼"
.45 Colt Nosler 250 GR. JHP			
18.5 gr. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,230 fps	1"

HANDLOADS/CAST BULLETS:

LOAD	SIXGUN	VELOCITY	ACCURACY*
.44 Mag. BRP 255 gr. SWC-GC			
21.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,565 fps	1½"
12.5 grs. VV N350	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,349 fps	1½"
13.0 grs. VV3N37	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,354 fps	1¼"
12.5 grs. VV N350	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,325 fps	1¼"
.44 Mag. BRP 290 gr. SWC-GC			
18.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,406 fps	1½"
10.8 grs. VV N350	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,169 fps	1½"
11.0 grs. VV 3N37	Ruger SBH 10½"	1,194 fps	1½"
18.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,370 fps	1¾"
10.8 grs. VV N350	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,162 fps	1¼"
11.0 grs. VV 3N37	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,170 fps	1¾"
.45 Colt BRP 260 gr. SWC-GC			
18.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,325 fps	1½"
.45 Colt BRP 305 FN-GC			
18.5 grs. VV N110	Ruger Rdhk 7½"	1,287 fps	1½"

*Accuracy measurements are the result of three five-shot groups at 25 yards.

VIHTAVUORI

continued from page 29

has the burning rate in the range of Winchester's 540 or Alliant's Herco and is well-suited for everything from the .30 Luger up to and including .44 Mag., .45 Auto and .45 Colt.

N350 is the slowest burning of the 300 series powders from Vihtavuori and is comparable to Blue Dot, 800-X, and Accurate Arms #7. 3N37, originally designed for rimfire cartridges with burning rates between 340 and 350, is applicable to all sixgun cartridges.

N110, the fastest burning of the Vihtavuori rifle powders, is an excellent choice for the same cartridges that use Alliant's #2400, Hodgdon's H110, Winchester's 296 and Accurate Arms' #9, namely the magnum cartridges, .357, .41 and .44, as well as the .454 Casull and heavy loads in the venerable .45 Colt.

For the scientifically minded, Vihtavuori provides the following statement: "All V handloading propellants are surface treated to obtain just the right rate of progressive burning to ensure the highest possible velocity at an appropriate chamber pressure. As single base powders, they also exhibit a lower caloric value as compared to spherical propellants. V propellants are extremely stable, both ballistically and chemically. They are, of course, nonhygroscopic. The ample graphite coating makes metering with V propellants as easy as

spherical types. The porous nature of the 300 series enhances the rapid burning required for this type of propellant."

The Vihta Sixgun

For testing the Vihtavuori line of powders applicable to sixguns, we used N110, N350 and 3N37, all of which are appropriately suited for hunting loads in magnum revolvers. Hard cast bullets were used in both .44 Mag. and .45 Colt sixguns, while jacketed bullets were chosen to be put to the test in the .357 Mag., the .41 Mag., the .44 Mag. and the .45 Colt. To keep things fairly simple, we used Nosler's JHPs and BRP's premium cast bullets.

For cast bullets in the Vihtavuori tests, we chose the 255 gr. and 290 gr. SWC for the .44 Mag., and the 260 gr. SWC and 305 gr. FN for the .45 Colt. All of these are hard cast bullets of 20 Brinnell or higher, suitable for the penetration needed for the hunting of really large animals, and all are of the gas check design.

All loads were assembled using Starline brass, which not only has been proven to be of exceptional quality, but is also readily available in virtually any sixgun chambering. Ignition for all loads was performed by CCI's Magnum Pistol Primers, #550 for the .357 Mag. loads, and #350 for the big bore cartridges. Sixguns used for testing included Ruger Single Actions and Redhawks, and Freedom Arms large-framed five-shooters.

Recipes For Success

In the .44 Mag., one of our favorite hunting handguns is Ruger's 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Super Blackhawk. With 21.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 under the BRP 255 gr. Keith-style bullet, muzzle velocity is more than 1,550 fps and would probably handle 95 percent or more of our handgun hunting chores.

For the really big stuff using the .44 Mag., 18.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 under the 290 gr. BRP Keith-style bullet yields a muzzle velocity of more than 1,400 fps — a load that will easily penetrate heavy bone and muscle.

The load of 13.0 grs. of Vihtavuori 3N37 under the BRP 255 gr. bullet in the long-barreled Super Blackhawk not only achieved 1,350 fps, it also comes very close to a 1" group at 25 yards with iron sights. The long sight radius afforded by the 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " barrel, as well as the undercut plain black post front sight, really helps tighten up groups fired with iron sights.

For heavy loading the .45 Colt with Vihtavuori powder, we used only N110 and BRP's 260 gr. and 305 gr. hard cast bullets. Both bullets were loaded with 18.5 grs. of N110. This is the same charge we use with these bullets and #2400; however, muzzle velocities are from 125 to 200 fps faster with Vihtavuori N110.

With this charge of 18.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110, muzzle velocity from a 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ " sixgun is 1,325 fps with the 260 gr. Keith-style bullet, and just shy of 1,300 fps with the 305 gr. FN

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bullet that was originally designed for use in the .454 Casull. Here again we have heavy-duty hunting loads for large, tough critters. These loads are only for modern, heavy-duty .45 Colt sixguns and definitely not Colt single actions or replicas thereof!

We especially prefer these .44 Mag. and .45 Colt loads for use in 5½" Ruger Bisley "packin' pistols." These sixguns carry very easily on the hip and provide ample power for just about anything we are likely to encounter.

For those that are not recoil shy, these are also excellent loads for use in Ruger's 7½" Blackhawks. The Colt Single Action Army-style grip frames on the Old Model Ruger Blackhawks do not handle recoil as well as the Bisley grip frame; however, they are also very easy-packing, big-bore sixguns.

Hunting With A Jacket

For the use of Vihtavuori powders with Nosler's jacketed bullets, five bullets in four calibers were put to the test. The Nosler .357 Mag. 158 gr. JHP loaded over 14 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 yields 1,400 fps from a 7½" Freedom Arms Model 83, shoots with excellent accuracy, and would be a great choice for the smallest of big game, namely those under 150 lbs.

For the middle magnum, the .41, Nosler's 210 gr. JHP over 17.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 clocks out at nearly 1,450 fps from a Freedom Arms Model 83 and also shoots with excellent accuracy. We

consider this a much better choice for any big-game hunting than the .357 Mag. and especially for deer-size critters.

Moving up to the really big bores, two Nosler 44 Mag. JHPs were put to use. For deer-size game, we have the 240 gr. Nosler, which does 1,535 fps from a 7½" Ruger when loaded over 21.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110.

For the bigger stuff, Nosler offers the 300 gr. JHP. This bullet, as all other Nosler bullets, has a cannellure that is higher on the bullet than most of those found on the jackets of other manufacturers' bullets. This means that Nosler bullets are seated deeper in the cartridge case, which of course reduces powder capacity.

All three of the Vihtavuori powders, N110, N350 and 3N37, gave virtually identical muzzle velocities of around 1,100 fps with the 300 gr. bullet when used with 14 grs. of N110, 10.8 grs. of N350 and 11 grs. of 3N37.

Finally we come to the .45 Colt and Vihtavuori loadings suitable for use in modern .45 Colt sixguns. For the .45 Colt with Nosler's 250 gr. JHP, a load of 18.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 has a muzzle velocity of more than 1,225 fps and shoots superbly. Both this load and Nosler's 240 gr. JHP .44 Mag. bullet over 21.5 grs. of Vihtavuori N110 in Ruger Redhawk's are both capable of shooting powerful, accurate groups.

The addition of these new powders has

opened up a world of new possibilities in handloading, especially for big-bore sixgun cartridges. Vihtavuori's powders are welcome additions to any loading bench.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Vihtavuori Oy

Vihtavuori 41330, Finland
Phone: 011-358-14-3779211
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Delta Z Knives

Italian shotguns are among the finest in the world. Italian fountain pens are among the finest in the world. Italian sports cars are among the finest in the world. Italians *know* craftsmanship, a fact that was recently reinforced when we evaluated a new Italian knife.

Delta Z Knives are handcrafted with many of the features you normally find only on custom-made knives. Falling into the genre of edged weapons we call "combat folders," the model we tested is known by an alphanumeric designation, DZ-5126.

The blade is what is known as a "tanto" style, and is Teflon coated, hollow ground, plain on the leading edge and serrated near the grip. The DZ-5126 is of liner lock construction, the best for a serious-usage knife.

The handle is made of 6082-T6 aluminum, covered with a synthetic material Delta Z calls Velutex. The handles have a bit of "sticky" to them, which we particularly liked. The same knife is available with carbonfiber handles for \$60 extra. There is a pocket clip positioned for a blade-down carry.

High quality is evident throughout the knife. Torx head screws are used, and the spacers are nicely machined. To prevent the hand from

sliding down the blade on a strong thrust, there is adequate serration for the thumb and a mild finger-stop for the index finger.

The Delta Z combat folder passes our muster. It retails for \$159.95, which is in the ballpark for a good factory knife.

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Leupold & Stevens Scope Cover

Always improving a good thing to make it better, Leupold & Stevens came up with a clever new spotting scope cover for their line of variable power spotting scopes. We realize "clever" and "spotting scope cover" probably shouldn't be in the same sentence, but give us a moment.

Spotting scopes are used at the range to zero rifles and spot targets, as well as in the field for big game "glassing" and enjoying the aerobatics of .220 Swift-enhanced prairie dogs. In other words, spotting scopes go a lot of places. The usual type of cover wraps around the scope and

protects it well enough, but is awkward to remove when mounting the scope on a tripod.

The new Leupold spotting scope cover stays on the scope in the field, but folds back out of the way with a clever eyepiece cover. Velcro closures hide a tripod adapter port. The objective lens is also Velcroed over. The "bat wing" eye piece cover is zippered shut, but also has strips of Velcro to hold the "wings" back when the

scope is tripod mounted.

The new cover comes with all Leupold 12-40x60mm variable spotting scopes or can be purchased separately for \$67.90. The scope and cover together run \$1,271.40. Yes, that's spendy, but it's a Leupold. Quality doesn't cost, it pays. Ask your eyeballs after a day of glassing for an elk.



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The Army Marksmanship unit competes with Federal Match. Our own handgun experts at *GUNS* rely on Federal Match. We consider the 230 gr. FMJ fodder to be the benchmark by which all other .45 ACP ammunition is measured.

Federal Match is neither new nor exciting. It doesn't have a designer hollowpoint or sexy packaging. It is the workhorse round on the line at the National Matches at Camp Perry. The ballistics are standard .45 ACP — the big 230 gr. ball round trundles along at a leisurely 850 fps. It is not a fast-stepper, but it's as reliable as a Super Cub. It's simply the most accurate ball ammo for a .45 ACP.



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The Qwikcase has two "failsafe" child locks that prevent the gun compartment from opening unless two safety latches are also pressed. Spaced far enough apart so that a child's hand could not reach them, the safety latches are also semi-concealed, so a child probably wouldn't see them anyway.

The Qwikcase can be bolted to the floor of a car or next to the bed. In testing a unit, we found the lock opened smoothly and quickly and the door swung open freely. Inside was a one-size-fits-all holster designed for small revolvers and most autopistols.

We prefer proper training and education to teach children gun safety, but that is not always a viable option. When Dennis the Menace comes over to play with your son, the \$101.40 you paid for Qwikcase might be the best Ben Franklin you ever spent.



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Solving THE VARIABLES

The innate variability of guns and ammunition means that a reloader will hardly ever produce the *exact same* result even if all the components are as identical as possible.

It's mostly a chemical problem. Gunpowder has two major components. Single-base powder is made with nitrocellulose. Double-base powders add nitroglycerine. Both of these are organic compounds made by a chemical reaction of several different ingredients.

Unfortunately, organic reactions rarely proceed to 100 percent completion, so there may be little differences in the product every time it's compounded. Now, we're not talking about big differences — but it doesn't take much to have an effect.

Primers are also chemical mixtures subject to variability. The manufacturers do an incredible job of controlling these

processes. Without complex chemical analyses, the shooter would not be able to see any difference at all — but a good gun can.

As for what we *can* see — combustion is also an organic chemical reaction, so it doesn't go to 100 percent either — which largely accounts for the differences we see if we chronograph a string of shots. There *will* be a range of velocity. In fact, it is very rare to see exactly the same reading

on any two shots within a 10-shot string.

Unfortunately, the system of cartridge and powder is not very efficient — it only converts 25 to 30 percent of the energy available in the fuel (gunpowder) into useful work.

When we make an incremental adjustment of the powder charge when working up a load, the first thing we have to figure out is whether or not there really *is* a difference. Here's how: Most chronographs give you some statistical data, such as standard deviation. Even though standard deviation may not be the best guide, it allows a reasonable guess.

Simply add the standard deviation to the velocity; unless the new load equals or exceeds that number, the difference between the two loads is probably not significant. Unless we really *gain* something in the process, there's no reason to subject your gun to more wear and tear.

As chemical mixtures, primers are subject to variability. This means that reloaders will hardly, if ever, produce the exact same results twice.



THE MYTH OF PRIMER BRANDS

Some reloaders think there is something magical or mystical about their favorite brand of primer. In most cases, that really isn't true. Over the years, I've loaded ammo with identical components except for the primer brand, and in almost every case, this simple test showed that there really wasn't a big difference. If you're an accuracy nut, you *may* sometimes be able to say that one brand of primer gives better groups than another. You can, however, only say that for the very specific combination of components used at that time.

Suppose that Brand A primer was clearly far ahead of others in a .45 Colt load. That in no way promises that the same primer will be best in the .45 ACP.

Simply put, there are no hard and fast rules. Things change. Whether you want the most velocity or the last possible thousandth of an inch in accuracy, it is an ongoing process of experimentation.

The only way to be sure that a load really is superior is to keep testing. In the exacting process of wringing every bit of accuracy out of a given gun, it's nice to know that our efforts are producing results.



Dangerous Depths

Rifle shooters know that seating bullets out closer to the rifling almost always improves accuracy. It also lowers pressure. It's a win-win deal.

But going the other way and seating a bullet deeper than normal can be the road to ruin. A test done some years ago by the NRA and H.P. White Laboratories provides some very interesting data. The specific investigation was an attempt to duplicate the "Bullseye surprise," in which a charge of 2.7 gr. Bullseye with a 148 gr. wadcutter bullet was claimed to detonate and destroy revolvers. They simply couldn't make that happen.

When they doubled the charge to 5.4 gr. and then began to seat the bullet deeper, Pandora's box opened.

What this test revealed is that the powder charge begins to be compressed when the bullet is seated 1/16" below normal, and from that point, pressures climb rapidly. In the .38 Special, the max-

.38 SPECIAL PRESSURE DATA

Charge	Depth	Pressure
2.7 grs.	normal	8,700 psi
2.7 grs.	+ 1/8"	16,100 psi
5.4 grs.	normal	32,300 psi
5.4 grs.	+ 1/16"	46,400 psi
5.4 grs.	+ 1/8"	55,500 psi
5.4 grs.	+ 3/16"	76,100 psi

imum pressure is 18,500 psi. We don't know at what pressure a good gun would fail catastrophically, but we can be sure the last combination would do it handily.

It is an indisputable fact that pressures go up as powder space decreases, which is what happens when bullets are seated below where they were designed to be. There might be some situations where it is desirable to seat a bullet more deeply than normal — for example, if a bullet was too long for a revolver's cylinder. This, however, is a trip to never-never land so, in the absence of pressure-tested data, a major reduction in powder charge is mandatory, followed by the customary precautions of working up a load.



Although seating bullets out closer to the rifling can improve accuracy, seating a bullet deeper than normal is an invitation to disaster.

BUSHING DIES: A MORE PRECISE WAY TO RESIZE CARTRIDGE CASES

By Holt Bodinson

Serious handloaders appreciate these tools which provide greater precision and also extend brass life.

There has been a quiet revolution at work in the reloading world, with the development of a whole generation of sizing dies designed to minimize the work-hardening of brass and provide an ideal case-to-chamber fit. The driving force behind this revolution has been the benchrest set, with their eternal quest for the one-hole group.

Benchresters have been the source of the most important advances in modern riflery, including synthetic stocks, glass and pillar bedding, precision barrels, target-grade bullets, match-grade primers, and short, fat, efficient case designs, just to name a few. The benchrest community is also responsible for bringing us reloading tools designed and manufactured so precisely that there is simply no longer any excuse for turning out second-class handloads.

Advances in sizing-die designs have been particularly interesting. The emphasis is now on matching the case to the chamber as closely as possible, while avoiding the excessive sizing that can lead to distortion, concentricity problems and work-hardened brass.

The traditional challenge to die makers has been that sizing-die dimensions have been dictated by minimum cartridge standards established by SAAMI. It's a one-size-fits-all type of problem. Brass cases of various makers exhibit different thicknesses even within the same lot, and typical

continued on page 38

Right: Unlike standard resizing dies, bushing dies can be used to reform cartridge cases with a minimum of distortion.

Below: Redding's sizing bushings are available in 0.001" increments with a super hard Titanium Nitride finish.



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BUSHING DIES

continued from page 37

over-the-counter sizing dies must resize minimum-thickness brass to firmly hold the bullet and to fit any chamber of any rifle.

Just The Right Size

Leading benchrest die makers such as Neil Jones and L.E. Wilson solved the problem for precision reloaders decades ago by introducing dies fitted with interchangeable neck sizing and shoulder bump bushings — dies that could be tailored exactly to the thickness of the brass in the neck. While L.E. Wilson focused on hand dies requiring the use of an arbor press, Neil Jones adapted the design to standard 7/8-14 presses. Both makers still turn out beautifully machined dies that are highly favored by precision reloaders.

What's interesting is that the interchangeable bushing die design has recently been picked up by major firms such as Redding and Hornady, making this advanced design more well known and more available to the average handloader.

What's the advantage of interchangeable bushing dies? Well, it's math time and you can easily make these same measurements with your own dies. In fact, you should. It's a very educational exercise.

The following measurements were taken from once-fired brass in a Model 70 Winchester .308 Featherweight, which was then sized in a standard RCBS full-length sizing die.

Neck diameter of the loaded .308 round: 0.336"

Neck diameter after firing: 0.349"

Neck diameter after sizing with expander button removed: 0.329"

Total reduction of neck after sizing: 0.020"

At this point, we have worked the brass down .020". Now we draw the expander button (measuring 0.307") back through the neck and increase the neck diameter of case to 0.335". In short, we have worked the brass down and then back up .026" (actually a bit more because of the brass spring back).

A More Modest Approach

With a bushing die, the outside neck diameter of the loaded round is taken as a constant reference point: 0.336". A bushing is selected with an inside sizing diameter 0.002" to 0.003" smaller than the neck of the loaded round — 0.334".

Neck diameter after firing: 0.349"

Neck diameter after sizing with 0.334" bushing: 0.335"

Total reduction of neck after sizing: 0.014"

In this case, the brass in the neck has been worked down only .014", and the use of an expander button that can create distortion and concentricity problems all of its own has been eliminated. (Redding and Hornady do offer expander buttons in their

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die lines to add uniformity to cases that vary in neck thickness.)

The advantages of modern bushing dies that are available in increments of .001" are that neck sizing can be minimized, brass worked less, neck concentricity maintained, and expander buttons eliminated in most cases.

Uniformity of the brass you begin with is the real challenge. The most uniform brass lately comes from either Lapua or Norma. It's pricey, but it's quality. You need to begin with brass that varies not more than 0.003" in the neck. If it does, we suggest using Sinclair's power screwdriver system to turn your necks to a uniform thickness before employing bushing dies.

When neck sizing only with either bushing dies or standard neck sizing dies, the shoulder will progressively move forward, so eventually you will have to full-length resize or use a Neil Jones or Hornady shoulder/neck-style sizing bushing to set the shoulder back 0.002" to 0.003". In fact, Neil Jones recommends setting the shoulder back every time the neck is resized to maintain its fire-formed position. Jones, Redding and Hornady also offer full-length sizing dies that incorporate their interchangeable neck bushings.

Bushing dies represent one of the great advances in precision reloading. For the serious handloader, they're an invaluable tool for maximizing the accuracy of ammunition while prolonging case life. By all means, send for the catalogs of Neil Jones, L.E. Wilson, Sinclair, Redding and Hornady, with their detailed descriptions of bushing dies and recommended reloading procedures.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Hornady

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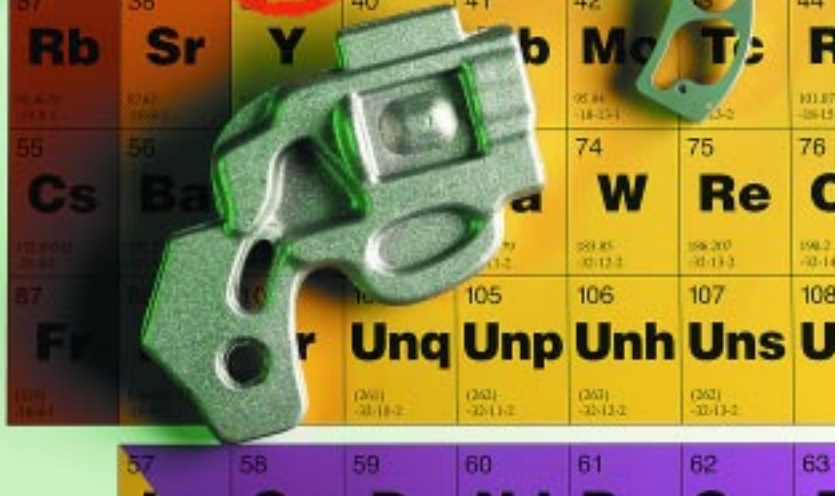
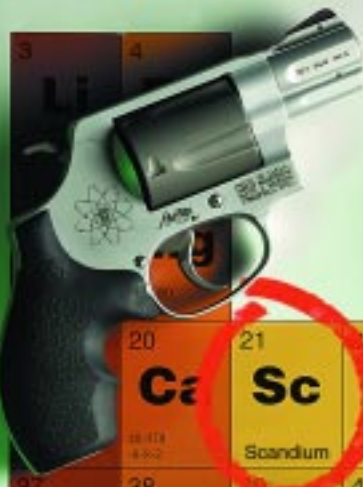
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DESERT EAGLE 50AE

By Dick Williams

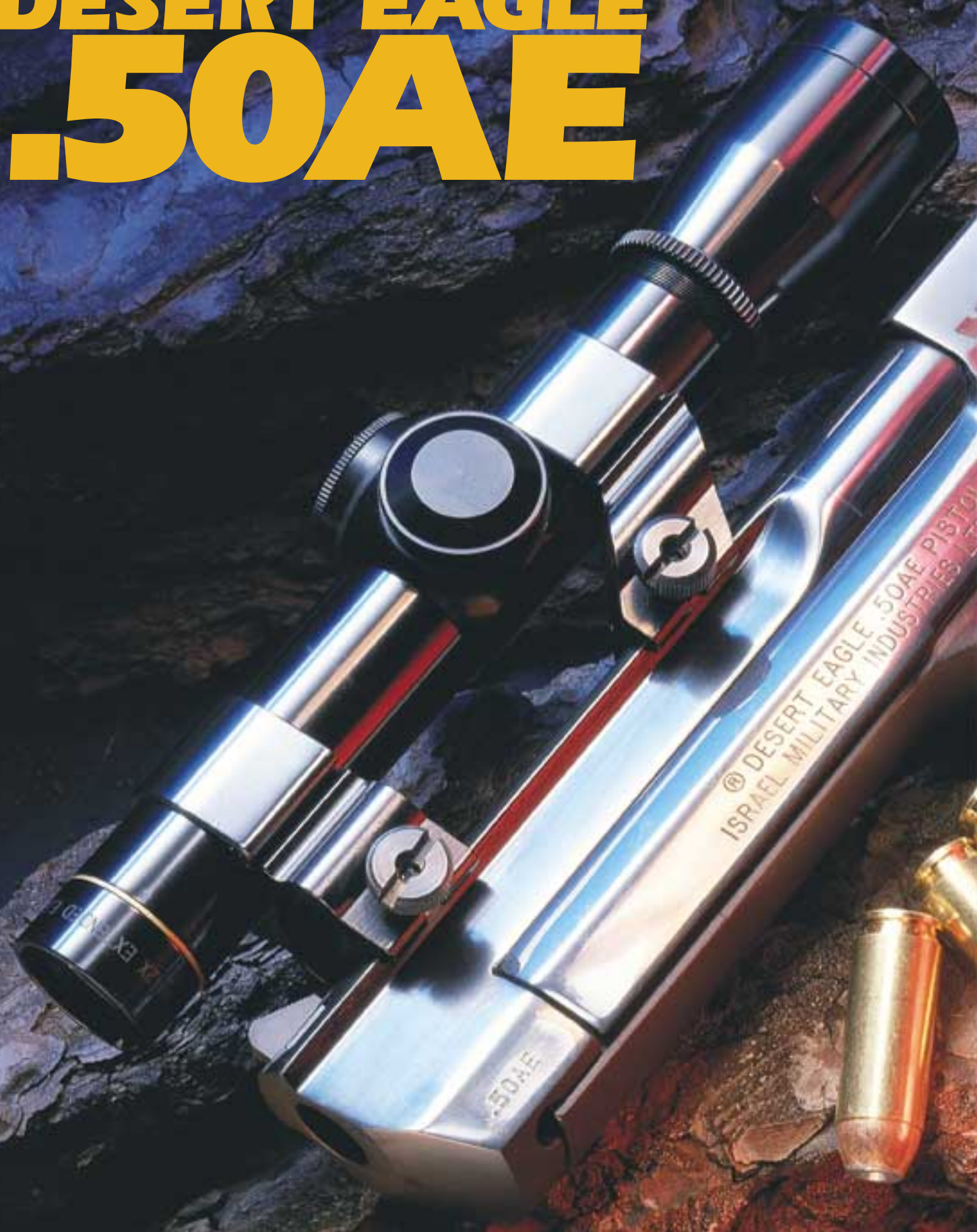
Magnum Research's Desert Eagle has returned home. The big bird was briefly made at Saco Defense in Maine when Magnum Research was looking at other manufacturers besides the original maker, Israeli Military Industries. But when Saco was sold and the company subsequently committed to defense products, the Eagle returned to the Israeli factory. The new gun features a few improvements while keeping the best of the original.

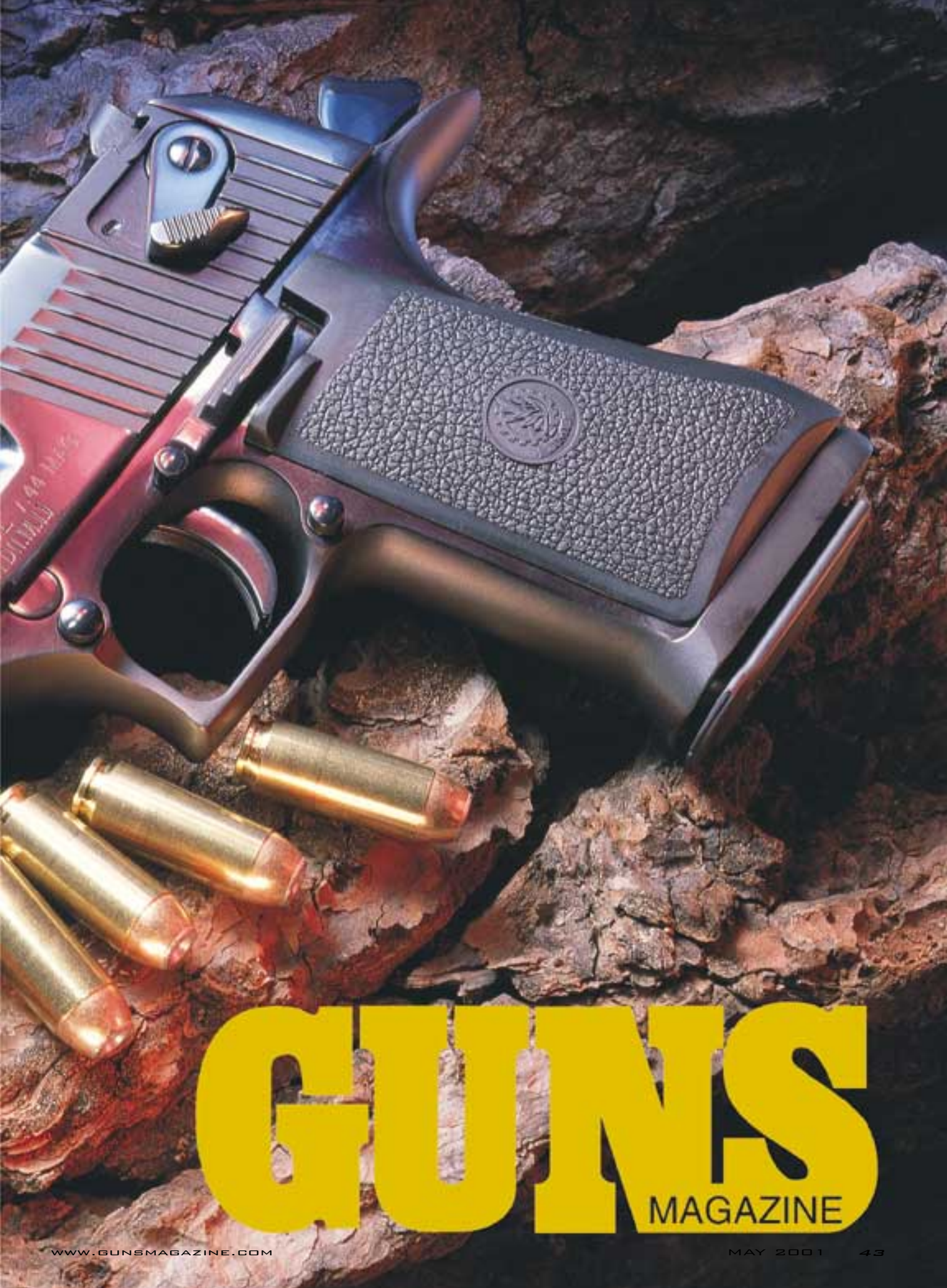
When examining the Desert Eagle, it is most appropriate to consider the flagship of the line, the 50 AE. A muzzle view of an Eagle in any caliber demands attention and respect just from the massive metal trapezoid pre-

Opposite: Slide-mounted safety, magazine release and slide stop are all easily accessible. Right: The Desert Eagle comes topped with rugged, high-visibility fixed sights; adjustable sights are also available.



DESERT EAGLE .50A&E





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50A1



Opposite: The Desert Eagle features an ambidextrous safety as well as an adjustable trigger. Above: With a simple barrel change, the .50 AE Desert Eagle can be converted to a .44 Mag. or a .440 Cor-Bon, as all three cartridges have identical case rims.

sented, but when you see a 1/2" diameter hole staring out of all that steel, it is truly hypnotic, even when you can't see the large hollowpoint contained in the 325 gr. bullet.

A Gun With Style

Depending on customer specifications, the overall color and finish of an Eagle can vary greatly. The standard factory offering is entirely matte black. If you plan to shoot the gun a lot, then the dull black factory finish may be the best choice, since any wear, bumps or dings simply add to its overall impression of "work horse" efficiency.

If you want a bit more showmanship, or if you live in a maritime environment with attendant humidity, one of the hard chrome finishes — either polished or satin nickel — might be best. Magnum Research's Custom Shop also offers options in titanium and 24 karat gold. The gun is also available in a polished deep blue.

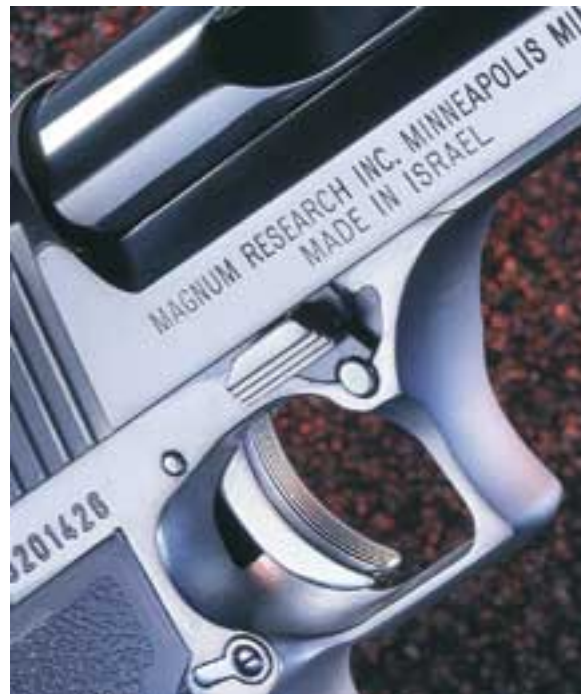
The current Eagle is the Mark XIX. One of its best features is the interchangeability of barrels on the same frame — not just barrels of different lengths, but also barrels of different calibers. Calibers .50 AE, .44 Mag. and .440 Cor-Bon all use cartridge cases with the same size rim, so they can all use the same bolt. Pop off one barrel, pop on the other, and you're ready to fire.

You can also install a .357 Mag. barrel, but this

requires a bolt change to accommodate the smaller rim. Not a big deal, but not quite the five-second caliber change you can achieve with the others. A word of caution, however — the Mark XIX frame must only be used with new, Mark XIX barrels. Do not install barrels from an older Desert Eagle.

The secret that allows using the same frame for different caliber barrels is the size of the gas port in the barrel, which regulates propellant gases used to cycle the gun. The gas generated when the cartridge is fired flows through the port and along a channel beneath the barrel. At the end of the channel, it pushes against a small piston attached to the slide and drives the slide rearward. As the slide starts to move (this doesn't

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HORSE' EFFICIENCY."***



Above left: With a change of its rotary bolt, the Desert Eagle can be converted to a .357 Mag. — but let's face it, you didn't buy a 4 ½ lb. gun to shoot .357, did you? **Above:** Hooking a finger around the front of the trigger guard can help stabilize the recoil generated by the powerful .50 AE. **Below left:** The Desert Eagle is available in matte black, nickel, chrome and high-gloss black finishes — not to mention titanium or gold-plated finishes, for those who are looking to round out their collection.

occur until the bullet has cleared the muzzle), the bolt rotates, unlocks and moves rearward, ejecting the empty shell.

When the slide starts moving forward, the bolt picks up a new round from the magazine and pushes it forward into the chamber. At the end of its forward motion, the bolt rotates and locks behind the chambered round. Presto, ready to fire again!

Ports, Flutes & Other Good Features

You can't see the difference in size of the gas portholes in the barrel, but the differences in external configuration of various caliber barrels are instantly visible. The barrel flutes vary in size for different calibers and barrel lengths, and perform a couple of functions. Primarily (and most obviously), they affect the weight balance and dynamics of the overall gun. Additionally, barrel flutes facilitate cooling, and when the Eagle is shot repeatedly in the course of an afternoon, it really heats up.

For the most part, the Eagle's good features have not changed. All guns still have the mirror-smooth polygonal rifling that produces such fine accuracy with jacketed bullets. Cast bullets should not be fired in the Desert Eagles due to the possibility of clogging the gas port with a lead particle — a problem that requires factory attention to cure.

The trigger pull is adjustable, and the factory sights are the same large, black, rugged, dovetailed, non-adjustable, highly visible square rear sight notch and ramped front blade that have been around for awhile. If you can't zero your favorite load, Millet makes adjustable sights specifically for the Eagle. The adjustable trigger dates back to the Mark VII, and the fixed sights have been on the guns even longer.

Grips are hard, lightly pebbled plastic and are extremely

ACCURACY RESULTS: DESERT EAGLE .50 AE

AMMO	VELOCITY	ACCURACY*
FACTORY LOADS		
Mag. Res. 300 gr. JHP	1,422 fps	.15"
Samson 300 gr. JSP	1,348 fps	.125"
Speer 325 gr. JHP	1,345 fps	.1"
Mag. Res. 350 gr. JSP	1,209 fps	.75"

HANDLOADS

325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/30 grs. Win. 296	1,213 fps	.175"
325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/31 grs. Win. 296	1,267 fps	.1"
325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/32 grs. Win. 296	1,348 fps	.2"
325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/30 grs. H110	1,211 fps	.15"
325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/31 grs. H110	1,261 fps	.2"
325 gr. Speer JHP Gold Dot/32 grs. H110	1,304 fps	.2"

* Accuracy measurements are the average of three five-shot groups fired at 25 yards from a sandbag rest. Factory loads were fired with scope attached; handloads were fired using iron sights only.

tough while being relative thin. The external edges of the gun are smooth and “user friendly.” Unless you have small hands, the gun’s ergonomics are good. Considering the size of the cartridges chambered for the Desert Eagle, there’s not much shrinking that can be done on the grip; it has to house a magazine filled with .44 Mag. and .50 AE ammo.

A Case In Your Face

Given the Eagle’s heavy-recoiling calibers and its gas-operated rotary bolt system, the big bore semi-autos do generate a lot of torque when the gun is fired and tries to move both vertically and rotationally in the horizontal plane. Sometimes the .50 AE and .440 Cor-Bon rotate enough to eject empty cases into the shooter’s face rather than high and off to the side like the .44 and .357 Magnums. If you have this problem, there are some different things you might try.

First, and least expensive in terms of hardware modification, is to install Hogue finger-groove rubber grips. The grooves may allow you to control the torque sufficiently so that the gun doesn’t rotate and send the empties to smack you in the face.

Another suggestion that vastly enhances the joy of shooting any heavy-recoiling gun is to have the gun ported by Mag-na-port International. The redirected gas flow reduces muzzle movement and felt recoil.

If you’re a handloader, you can simply reduce your loads to about 1,200 fps, perhaps even lower if you prefer. You’ll still be getting thunderous performance and stimulating therapy, while exerting much greater control over the gun’s movement during recoil.

A change in technique that works for us when shooting off-hand is to modify the two-handed grip used for the heavier loads from the usual relaxed overlap, deliberately wrapping the weak-hand index finger around the squared front of the trigger guard. This minimizes rotation, allowing empty brass to eject high and right of the shooter’s face. Since this is not our natural preferred style, however, we tend to get slightly larger groups.

The Eagle Flies

The heaviest-recoiling factory load tested was Magnum Research’s 300 gr. JHP at 1,422; the gentlest load was Magnum Research’s 350 gr. bullet at 1,209 fps.

We were not struck by ejecting brass when testing any of the factory loads off sandbags with the scoped Eagle. The gun was equipped with a

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***“THE DESERT EAGLE’S TRIGGER PULL IS ADJUSTABLE
AND THE FACTORY SIGHTS ARE THE SAME LARGE,
BLACK, RUGGED, DOVETAILED HIGHLY VISIBLE
SQUARE NOTCH REAR AND RAMPED FRONT BLADE
THAT HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR A WHILE.”***

RUGER'S BIG BORES:

THE 99/44 DEERFIELD & .45-70 NO. 1

Whether you fancy a modern semi-auto or a traditional single shot, Ruger has a handy hunting rifle for you.

By John Taffin

After dropping the .44 Mag. Carbine from production 15 years ago, Ruger now re-introduces the .44 Mag. in a new incarnation — the Model 99/44. This new, gas-operated .44 Mag. weighs 6 lbs. 3 oz. and has an 18½" barrel with a 1:20 twist, and six-groove rifling instead of the old 12-groove rifling. The rear sight is now a folding aperture. Ruger scope rings are provided, and the list price is \$649.

As so often happens with manufacturers, Ruger dropped the original .44 carbine because of the cost of production. In the new Deerfield, this expense has been addressed with simplified gas-operated feeding mechanisms. Instead of a

tubular magazine, the new Deerfield operates from a four-round rotary magazine.

According to Ruger, "all major components of the Ruger Deerfield carbine are made from heat-treated, chrome-molybdenum alloy steel. The rotating bolt has dual front locking lugs that lock directly into the reinforced receiver, which provides the most rigid of breeching systems. The interlocking relationship between the hammer, firing pin, bolt and receiver prevents the firing of the cartridge until the bolt is fully and securely locked in the receiver." All these features combine to create a very enjoyable .44 Mag. rifle.



The Ruger 99/44 Deerfield resembles a beefy version of the famous Model 10/22, and holds four rounds of .44 Mag. in its rotary magazine.



An Old .44 With New Tricks

Although the Deerfield comes with a gold bead front sight and a receiver-mounted peep sight, we chose to use a Simmons 4x scope mounted with the excellent Ruger rings. Being a semi-automatic rifle, the Deerfield sends fired brass flying out of the top of the receiver where it bangs into the bottom of the scope. For those who may be con-

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TEST FIRING: 99/44 DEERFIELD 18 1/2" BARREL

Ammunition	Velocity	Accuracy*
Black Hills 240 gr. JHP	1,643 fps	3/4"
Black Hills 300 gr. XTP	1,432 fps	1 1/2"
Cor-Bon 240 gr. JHP	1,835 fps	3/4"
Cor-Bon 300 gr. XTP	1,563 fps	1"
Federal 180 gr. JHP	2,105 fps	1 1/2"
Hornady 180 gr. XTP	1,768 fps	1 1/2"
Hornady 200 gr. XTP	2,058 fps	1 1/2"
Hornady 240 gr. XTP	1,879 fps	1 1/2"
Hornady 300 gr. XTP	1,462 fps	3/4"
Speer 270 gr. Gold Dot	1,645 fps	1 1/2"
Triton 240 gr. JHP	1,733 fps	1 1/2"
Winchester 250 gr. Partition Gold	1,675 fps	5/8"

* Accuracy measurements are the result of three-shot groups at 50 yards.

RUGER MODEL NO. 1 .45-70 22" BARREL

Factory Loads	Load Velocity	Accuracy*
Buffalo Bore 350 gr. JFP	2,142 fps	1 1/2"
Buffalo Bore 405 gr. JFN	2,010 fps	1 1/2"
Buffalo Bore 430 gr. LBT	1,934 fps	7/8"
Cor-Bon 350 gr. Single-Shot	1,946 fps	7/8"
Cor-Bon 350 gr. JSP	1,943 fps	7/8"
Garrett 405 gr. JSP	1,818 fps	1 1/2"

HANDLOADS

Factory Loads	Load Velocity	Accuracy*
Hornady 300 JHP/55.5 grs. H322	2,056 fps	1"
Hornady 350 RN/52 grs. H322	1,998 fps	1 1/2"
Northern Precision 350 SP/52 grs. H322	1,849 fps	1 1/2"
Speer 350 FN/52 grs. H322	1,953 fps	1"
Beartooth 405GC/51 grs. XMR 2495	1,637 fps	3/4"
Beartooth 405GC/45 grs. RE-7	1,851 fps	1 1/2"
Beartooth 405 GC/28.5 grs. XMP 5744	1,355 fps	3/4"
Meister 405PB/28.5 grs. XMP 5744	1,339 fps	1"
Oregon Trail 405/28 grs. XMP 5744	1,364 fps	1 1/2"
Oregon Trail 500/35 grs. RE-7	1,319 fps	1 1/2"
Oregon Trail 500/26 grs. XMP5744	1,237 fps	1 1/2"
Oregon Trail 500/36 grs. IMR 3031	1,211 fps	1"

* Accuracy measurements are the result of three-shot groups at 100 yards.

ACCESSORIES To Make Your No. 1 NUMBER ONE!

Along with the Ruger No. 1 in .45-70, we tested two other very interesting items. If you've ever had to pack a rifle out of the woods, especially when you have to negotiate over very rough terrain, you know how difficult it is to keep the rifle sling from sliding off your shoulder. "Just Sling It" is the answer to this problem.

It is a very lightweight nylon, easily adjustable auxiliary sling that is carried in the pocket. Snap hooks at each end of the sling attach to the sling swivels, allowing the rifle to be securely carried like a backpack. This is an excellent idea from G.C.C.

A second excellent item for use with the Ruger No. 1 rifle comes from New England Custom Gun Service — an N-100 Ruger Peep Sight. What makes this add-on different from other receiver sights is the fact that it utilizes the rear scope-mounting scallop already found on the receiver of the No. 1.

Simply sight in with the scope, remove the scope, and install this receiver sight. Once sighted in, the receiver sight can be removed and placed in pocket or pack, and the scope can be reinstalled. If you encounter bad weather or very heavy cover that makes the use of the scope difficult, all you need is a large coin to remove the scope and replace it with the peep sight.

Another excellent idea.



Above: Ruger's classic No. 1 single-shot rifle performs exceptionally well in .45-70 with cast lead bullets. Below: Topped with an N-100 rear sight from New England Custom Guns, the No. 1 was quite capable of 1 MOA or less.



THE AIMPOINT GOES MILITARY

By Charles Karwan

This rugged, high-performance red dot sight is not just for competition shooting anymore.

The M16 is one of the most accurate, easy-to-shoot military rifles ever fielded, but like any iron-sighted rifle, its performance is limited by its sighting system. Consequently, the U.S. military has recently been procuring a variety of improved sighting systems for use on the M16A2 rifle and its shorter brother, the M4 carbine, particularly for special operations units. Among these is the Aimpoint CompM-XD red dot sight. When combined with a quick-detachable mounting ring and a "gooseneck" base, the Aimpoint becomes the M68 Sighting System.

The Aimpoint CompM-XD sight has the appearance of a short scope sight. However, instead of a conventional reticle, it projects an eye-catching bright red dot on the middle of the sight picture. When the sight is properly zeroed, the shooter has only to put the red dot where he wants the bullet to go and squeeze the trigger.

This type of sighting system has a number of significant advantages over a conventional optical sight. First, it has no specific critical eye relief, so the distance between the shooter's eye and the sight does not matter, as long as the shooter can see the target through the sight. Second, there is no parallax at any distance with regard to the red

dot and the shooter's eye positioning. Thus, positioning of the eye with regard to the sight is not critical and will not cause a wandering zero.

Finally, the red dot is eye-catching, extremely fast and easy to use. Consequently, this type of sight is probably the single best sighting system for use where fast target acquisition is critical, particularly on moving targets or when there are multiple targets to engage. This is why virtually all the top action-shooting competitors in the open (unlimited) class use red dot sights on their guns, including pistols, rifles and shotguns.

Rock Solid

Springfield Inc., the U.S. agent for Swedish-made Aimpoint products, provided us with a complete M68 Sighting System. The Aimpoint scope with quick-detachable Weaver-type rings can be mounted directly on the top receiver rail of any "flat top" AR-15, M16 or M4. It can also be mounted on the top handguard rail of any M16 rifle variation with the recently adopted handguard rail interface

One of the results of the military's search for an improved sighting system is the Aimpoint red dot scope, seen here atop an M4 carbine.





is that you can use your iron sights right through the Aimpoint whether it is turned on or not. Even neater is the fact that if your iron sights are zeroed, you can zero the Aimpoint without firing a shot.

Once the sight is mounted, simply aim through the iron sights and move the zeroing adjustments on the Aimpoint until the red dot rests right under the tip of the front sight at the point of aim when the front sight is centered in the rear peep. Once this is accomplished, the Aimpoint sight is zeroed — without firing a shot. It could hardly be easier.

Another advantage is that if you remove the Aimpoint or move it from one rifle to another, it only takes a minute to regain a good zero. We tried this scope on two different AR-15s, and it worked perfectly. On an M16A1-type rear sight, make sure you zero the scope to the short-range aperture, since the two rear sight apertures have different zeros. On an M16A2-type sight, which has two different size apertures with the same zero, we found that the zeroing of the scope was easier with the smaller rear sight aperture.

This zeroing system works because the Aimpoint red dot scope does not have any parallax or a fixed eye relief. When shooting using the red dot, you do not have to get down and look through the iron sights. Instead, you can look over them and just place the dot on target.

system, which is pretty much standard on M4A1 carbines used by Army Special Forces.

If the rifle has a fixed carrying handle or is a Flat-Top model with a detachable carrying handle installed, then the “goose neck” base must be used as an interface. The base is inserted into the top of the carrying handle and cinched down with a thumbscrew that goes through a hole in the top of the carrying handle.

This setup puts the sight in front of the carrying handle and out of the way. The neatest thing about this arrangement

“THIS TYPE OF SIGHT IS PROBABLY THE SINGLE BEST SYSTEM FOR USE WHERE FAST TARGET ACQUISITION IS CRITICAL, PARTICULARLY ON MOVING TARGETS OR WHEN THERE ARE MULTIPLE TARGETS TO ENGAGE.”





From Light To Dark

The red dot on the standard model subtends about 3 MOA, which means it is good for head shots out to nearly 200 yards. It seemed that the dot grew slightly in size as the intensity setting was increased. The windage and elevation adjustments have distinct 1/2 MOA clicks.

One of the military specifications for this sight was that it had to be compatible with night vision equipment such as the ANPVS 14 and other light-amplification sys-

Above: The red dot scope can be mounted easily on flat-top rifles, or on the carrying handle of older guns using the M68 gooseneck mount.

tems. When you turn this scope on, the first two clicks do not seem to have any effect with the naked eye. That is because those are the night vision settings. If you are wearing night vision goggles, you will be able to see the dot just fine at these settings.

On the third click, you can see the dot with the naked eye, but it is faint. The dot grows brighter with every

"IT IS NATURAL TO WORRY ABOUT BATTERIES WITH ANY ELECTRONIC SYSTEM. FORTUNATELY, THIS SYSTEM HAS A RELATIVELY HUGE BATTERY LIFE, WITH A MINIMUM OF 200 HOURS AND A MAXIMUM OF 1,000 HOURS, DEPENDING UPON CONDITIONS AND USAGE."

click after the third. You might think that the darker the conditions, the brighter the dot setting necessary; however, the opposite is generally true. In dark conditions, the fainter dot settings are more than adequate, while in bright light, the brighter settings are needed to get a good sight picture.

The particular Aimpoint model adopted by the Army has no magnification, so it will not increase your precision of aiming. In other words, do not expect to shoot tighter groups with an Aimpoint than with iron sights. The advantage, however, of having no parallax and only one point of eye focus is that it may allow many people to shoot tighter groups than they can with iron sights. We have been able to do some excellent work with this sight all the way out to 500 yards against a man-sized target.

The military has adopted this sight for two important reasons. First, it is one of the easiest and fastest sights available. Just put the dot where you want the bullet to go and squeeze the trigger. Second, it retains these traits in low-light conditions. As long as there is enough light to see your target, the bright red dot makes sight acquisition a snap. While this sight is one of the best there is for low-light applications, it is not by itself a night sight.

Electronic Enhancement

When the lighting conditions get so dim that targets cannot be seen with the naked eye, light-magnifying night vision goggles, or a night vision sight, tandem-mounted behind the Aimpoint sight, can be employed. With the Aimpoint on the night vision setting, the red dot, now appearing green, shows up clearly in the night vision sight.

One convenient feature of this arrangement is that as long as the Aimpoint is zeroed and the system's dot is used for sighting, the night vision scope does not have to be zeroed or even have a reticle. We tried this arrangement with a passive night vision scope mounted behind the Aimpoint, and it worked perfectly. We were able to make

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Right top-bottom: The Aimpoint's red dot reticle is adjustable, allowing shooters to utilize a bright dot in day-light situations, and a dim one for low-light encounters. Aimpoint scopes can also be mounted on the HK MP5, the M1A, and a variety of other combat rifles and carbines.



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AIMPOINT

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accurate shots at 100 yards in conditions so dark that the target could not be seen with the naked eye.

It is natural to worry about batteries with any electronic system. Fortunately, this system has a relatively huge battery life. Battery life depends on so many variables such as ambient temperature, intensity setting used, the number and duration of periods the system is turned off, and such. Consequently, it is impossible to give an accurate estimate of hours of operation before the battery begins to fail.

With the latest generation of Aimpoints, however, a ballpark performance level is a minimum of 200 hours and a maximum of over 1,000 hours. We left the system on continuously for several days straight without any problem.

Most military and police users will leave the Aimpoint turned off while on patrol and just use the iron sights if an immediate emergency shot is required. Once an engagement begins, it takes only a second to reach up and turn the sight on.

Naturally, the sight should be turned on just prior to going into what is expected to be a hot engagement or mission. A fresh spare battery should be carried at all times for backup. Battery changing or installation takes just a minute.

It is important to realize that if the battery does fail, with the gooseneck mount or RIS, you can still use your iron sights even with the scope attached. Consequently, battery failure does not equate to a weapon system failure.

Who's Afraid Of A Little Water?

The military trials for a red dot-type scope were very much dominated by the Aimpoint entry, because it was the only one that could really stand up to getting wet. Not only can the Aimpoint get wet; it is waterproof down to 80 feet. In fact, the Aimpoint will actually function under water — not that you would ever fire your rifle underwater. Maybe someone will mount one of these on their spear gun! This capability is primarily an asset for amphibious operations, river crossings and operations in wet weather.

It is a little-known fact that the U.S. military special operations community was among the first to use red dot-type weapon sights in combat, and they have many years of experience with them. There were red dot sights on M16s on the Son Tay Raid attempt to rescue American POWs from North Vietnam. They were found to be extremely effective for close-quarters, fast engagement against multiple targets and were used with deadly efficiency.

There were also red dot sights on the abortive attempt to rescue the Iranian hostages. Aimpoint red dot sights were used in Operation Desert Storm, including even by General Schwarzkopf's personal body-

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guards. As you would expect, the major users of these M68 Sighting Systems are Army Special Forces, Army Rangers and Navy SEALs.

Naturally, the Aimpoint sights are not restricted for use just on M16-type rifles. The lack of a critical eye relief makes them ideal for use on Cooper Scout-type rifles with a forward scope mount. They can also be mounted in the conventional manner for a scope sight on rifles or shotguns using Weaver-type bases. This is an ideal sight for use on brush guns, slug guns, entry guns and any other weapon where fast shooting is necessary or multiple targets may be engaged.

The Latest And Greatest

Aimpoint has a new version of this system, called the 5000XD, that offers 2x magnification along with most of the other features already mentioned. It has a larger objective and longer overall length than the previously mentioned model. It also offers a magnified view of the target for more precise aiming, which facilitates headshots out to 400 yards.

The 5000XD is particularly efficient for the Scout Rifle application. Most long eye-relief Scout scopes are 2x, 2.5x or 3x. For those debating between a red dot sight of no magnification and a low-powered scope, they can have the best of both worlds in one sight.

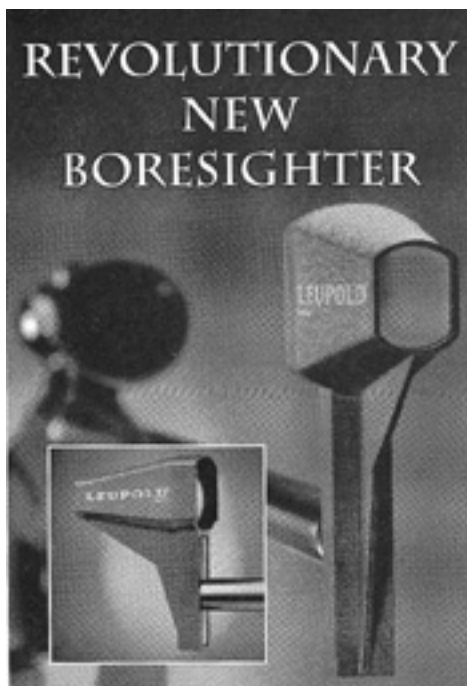
On our system, the red dot is 1.5 MOA, or half the size of the one on the military M68 system. This is a further aid to precision aiming but slightly less eye-catching for fast work. With this sight, we can shoot groups right up to the capabilities of the rifle.

We recently put an M68 sight system on the AR-15 rifle of a member of the local sheriff's department tactical team. He is now a strong devotee of the system, as are other members of the department that have tried it out. A number of them used this system to turn in the best performances they had ever achieved with a rifle in training.

If you have a tactical rifle particularly of the AR-15 type, you should give the Aimpoint system a try. Where it is legal to use, it is also a superb sighting system for use on hunting rifles and slug guns, particularly where fast shooting or moving targets are the norm. It is also ideal for use on long guns used for home defense.



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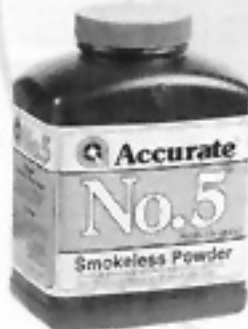
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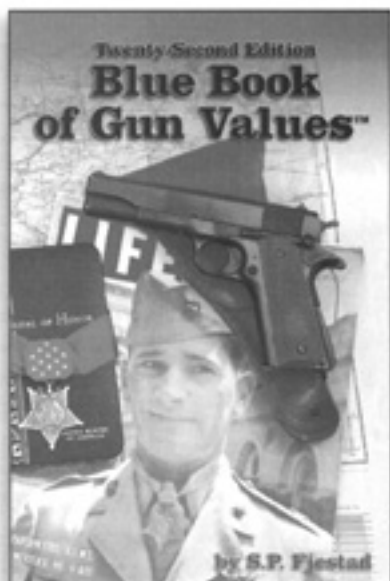
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DESERT EAGLE

continued from page 47

Leupold 2x pistol scope and see-through Weaver rings that clamped directly onto the integral rib located on top of the barrel. The quick, easy on-off capability of the Weaver rings is handy when changing from glass to iron sights.

Certainly, the added weight of scope and rings helped, as did the act of pushing the front of the trigger guard into the sandbags to steady the gun and help resist rotation. By not having to support the weight of the gun, the shooter was able to increase grip pressure of the left hand to minimize post-firing movement, while allowing the right hand to remain relaxed and exert a steady trigger pull. Try different things if you're having problems until you find something that works for you.

There is a fair sample of .50 AE factory ammo currently available. Under the Magnum Research logo, there is a hot 300 gr. JHP and a 350 gr. JSP. From Samson, there are two loads featuring a 300 gr. bullet, one a JHP and the other a JSP. We used only the 300 gr. JSP loads.

"The added weight of scope and rings helped to control recoil, as did the act of pushing the front of the trigger guard into the sandbags to steady the gun."

Speer offers just one load, the "in between" 325 gr. Gold Dot HP. The only factory round we've hunted with is the Speer 325 gr. Gold Dot, but it did a marvelous job on game ranging from Impala to Eland in South Africa.

For the .50 AE handloader, alas, only the Speer 325 gr. Gold Dot JHP bullet is available, which is not too bad considering how well it worked in the field. The good news is that all the classic slow-burning powders such as Hodgdon 110, Winchester 296, Accurate #9, and Alliant 2400 work quite well in the .50 AE.

If you can find one of the bullet casters who makes an inexpensive copper-plated .50 caliber bullet, give it a try, but we haven't located such a source.

Barrel twist rate on the new .50 AE Mark XIX is 1:19". Since this is the same as previous model Eagles, any handloads developed on an earlier .50 AE should work well in one of the newer models as long as you remain below the suggested maximums in the manuals.

Shooting a .50 AE Desert Eagle is an enjoyable experience not soon forgotten. We highly recommend this pistol as a worthy addition to any modern gun collection.



RUGER'S BIG BORES

continued from page 49

cerned about their scope being beaten up by the fired brass, Ruger provides a wraparound protective covering for the scope. Be advised that this covering will not fit all scopes, depending upon the size of the turrets.

The Deerfield is quite selective as to which ammunition it will use. Overall length must be such that cartridges will enter the magazine, thus precluding the use of some of the heavy-duty hunting ammunition now available with long 300 gr. bullets.

One notable exception is .44 Mag. ammunition loaded with 300 gr. Hornady XTP JHP bullets. Such loads are available from Black Hills, Cor-Bon, and of course, Hornady. Speer's heavy-bullet loading using the 270 gr. Gold Dot also feeds flawlessly. The Deerfield easily handled and shot those .44 Mag. loads with both 180 and 200 gr. JHP bullets. Ruger cautions against the use of cast bullets because of the danger of lead buildup in the gas port.

Having done considerable shooting of .44 Mag. loads in leverguns from Browning, Marlin, Rossi and Winchester, we expected quite a pounding from the Ruger Deerfield. Leverguns in .44 Mag. can take their toll after a long shooting session.

The Deerfield, however, due to both the gas operating system and an excellent stock design, keeps felt recoil to a minimum. In fact, this is one very pleasant-shooting rifle. The recoil experienced by the shooter is much less than one would expect for the muzzle energy that is delivered.

The Big-Bore Dozen

For testing the Deerfield, 12 factory hunting loads were chosen from seven different manufacturers. These included Black Hills, Cor-Bon, Federal, Hornady, Speer, Triton and Winchester. The lightest bullet load was Federal's 180 gr. JHP, which also featured the fastest muzzle velocity at 2,105 fps. Three loads — Black Hills, Cor-Bon and Hornady — were loaded with the 300 gr. XTP bullet.

The Deerfield will primarily be used as a relatively close-range hunting rifle for animals the size of deer and black bear. For this application, no one should have any problem precisely placing shots with this .44 Mag. carbine. Tests show that this is one very accurate rifle, especially given that we are shooting rather stubby sixgun bullets instead of conventional rifle bullets. At 50 yards, three-shot groups of less than 1" were not at all uncommon.

Black Hills' 240 gr. .44 Mag. loading, one of our favorite sixgun loads for hunting whitetail deer, clocks out at 1,643 fps from the Deerfield and places three shots in 3/4" at 50 yards. It repeats this with Cor-Bon's 300 gr. XTP load at 1,563 fps, and also with Hornady's 300 XTP load at 1,462 fps. Winchester's 250 gr. Partition Gold

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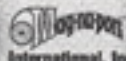


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Dept. 326

clocked out at 1,675 fps and placed all three shots in 5/8", while Triton's 240 gr. JHP, with a muzzle velocity of 1,733 fps, even bettered this with a group of 1/2". This is one good-shooting, easy-handling, light-weight .44 Magnum.

Speer's 270 gr. Gold Dot, with a muzzle velocity of 1,645 fps, grouped its three shots into 11/8" at 50 yards and gave a 100-yard performance that would make many a bolt-action rifle envious — three shots in 11/4".

Big-Bore Single Shot

Many of Ruger's firearm designs show a nostalgic link to the past. The Single-Six, the Blackhawk and the Super Blackhawk all have their roots in our frontier past. Ruger also reached into the past to bring forth the Model No. 1 single-shot rifle. While the Deerfield is a compact semi-automatic rifle for deer and black bear hunting, Ruger's No. 1 single-shot rifle has been chambered in a whole array of cartridges, from flat-shooting varmint rounds to some of the most powerful rounds available.

Approximately six years after the introduction of the Deerstalker, Ruger brought forth their first big-game rifle, the Model No. 1. By using a single-shot design, Ruger was able to provide a compact rifle with a longer barrel than a bolt-action rifle. In fact, with comparable barrel lengths, a Ruger Model No. 1 is approximately 4" shorter than a bolt-action rifle.

The Model No. 1 has been offered in many calibers and variations over the past 35 years, but none quite captures the imagination of the big-bore enthusiast like the .45-70.

To operate the Ruger No. 1, you simply move the lever forward, the block drops, and the chamber is exposed to insert a new cartridge. A sliding shotgun-style safety rests upon the tang, and it's easily operated by the thumb of the shooting hand.

All of Ruger's No. 1s are fitted with genuine walnut stocks and are available in Light Sporter, Medium Sporter, heavy-barreled Varminter, Tropical, and very nostalgic, Mannlicher-stocked International versions. List price for the Ruger No. 1 is \$774, \$20 extra for the International Model.

New this year, we also have stainless-steel versions with weather-defeating laminated stocks. The stainless-steel versions sell for \$820. At first, these prices may sound high, but not when compared with the price of either an imported or domestic Sharps single shot.

In testing the Ruger No. 1, we tried a vast array of both factory- and hand-loaded .45-70 ammunition. This included jacketed bullets in 300, 350 and 400 gr. weights, as well as 400 and 500 gr. cast bullets. Very few rifles would be able to handle such a wide variation of bullet weights and muzzle velocities with such success.

Admirable Performance

The Ruger No. 1 .45-70 proved capable of placing all bullet weights in groups of 1" for three shots at 100 yards. A rifleman should have no problem precisely placing his shots at reasonable ranges, whether the quarry be small deer hunted with 300 gr. bullets or large bear, moose or elk with the heavier 400 to 500 gr. bullets.

Factory loads from Buffalo Bore, Cor-Bon and Garrett, and handloads with Hornady, Northern Precision and Speer jacketed bullets, as well as cast bullets from Beartooth, Meister and Oregon Trail, all shot very well.

While the Ruger Deerfield .44 Mag. semi-automatic rifle is basically a small deer and black bear carbine, the Ruger No. 1 .45-70 is capable of easily taking any animal that walks. For deepest penetration, it would be very hard to beat Buffalo Bore's 430 gr. hard cast LBT bullet at a muzzle velocity of more than 1,900 fps. That is a lot of power from a very compact rifle.

One of the great assets of the .45-70 is the vast array of bullets, both jacketed and cast, available to reloaders. Among these are jacketed bullets from Hornady, Northern Precision and Speer in weights of 300 and 350 grs.; as well as cast bullets from Beartooth, a superbly shooting 405 gr. gas-check design; Meister's 405 gr. plain base bullet; and Oregon Trail's new 500 gr. bullet with four grease grooves. The latter is a most welcome addition to the machine cast bullet offerings and is also offered in both 350 and 400 gr. weights. Beartooth's gas-checked bullet brings out the best accuracy in the Ruger No. 1, whether driven at a traditional 1,300 fps or a more bone-crushing 1,600 fps.



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THE STATE OF THE CARTRIDGE

By Dave Anderson

Looking back at the last 100 years, we can see that the time is ripe for a new wave of innovation in rifle ballistics and cartridge design.

These are exciting times for rifle enthusiasts. New cartridges are being introduced at a rate not seen in 40 years. What started with a trickle of new

cartridges in 1997 is turning into a veritable flood.

Remington has developed a line of magnum-capacity, beltless cartridges in calibers from 7mm to .375. Winchester has announced a magnum beltless cartridge for short-action rifles (.300 WSM) and will doubtless add other calibers on the same basic case. Weatherby has two new calibers, Steyr has a new proprietary round and Marlin finally has a second cartridge bearing its name. Why so many new cartridges now?

The introductions of new cartridges tend to come in waves. Typically, every few years, new commercial cartridges are announced at a bewildering pace, followed by a period of relative calm in which the marketplace sorts out the winners and losers, and then the wildcatters set the stage for the next round.

It appears we are currently heading towards the peak of another wave. Over the last four years, Remington, Winchester and Weatherby have introduced as many new cartridges as they did in the previous 25 years, and the number will no doubt increase. To understand what is going on, it helps to look back at two previous waves.

The Mother Of Invention

The years following the First World War were tough for firearm manufacturers. They had just made huge capital investments and trained new employees to meet wartime demand when World War I ended and military contracts were cancelled. Just as they started to recover, thousands of surplus Krag, Mauser, Enfield and Springfield rifles were released to the civilian market, often at extremely low prices.

About the time the supply of surplus rifles ran out, the Great Depression struck. Manufacturers attempted to stimulate demand by introducing a number of new cartridges, actually a remarkable number considering the relatively modest demand for new firearms at the time. The list included the .300 Savage, .270 Win., .22 Hornet, .257 Roberts, .220 Swift, .218 Bee, .219 Zipper, .348 Win., and the adoption by Winchester of two British rounds, the .300 and .375 H&H Magnums.

During World War II, ammunition manufacturers were primarily involved in helping with the war effort and couldn't spare resources to produce existing calibers, much less introduce new ones. For a decade or so after World War II, demand for consumer goods, including firearms and ammunition, was so great that there was no need for new cartridges. Manufacturers had to go full-out just to meet demand. What innovation occurred was primarily done by wildcatters such as Ackley, Gibbs, Mashburn, Pfieffer, Powell, Sharpe, and a man who would profoundly influence the industry, Roy Weatherby.

A Booming Market

Sales of new firearms began to slow in the mid-1950s as supply began to catch up with demand, and armies around the world began adopting automatic weapons, once again putting tens of thousands of surplus bolt-action rifles on the market. Two new rounds which had been introduced, the .222 Rem. (1950) and .308 (1952), were both doing well. It was evident that more new cartridges could boost rifle sales.

Once the wave got going, it reached peaks unheard of before or since. Between 1950 and 1971, some 29 centerfire rifle cartridges were introduced by Norma, Remington, Weatherby and



Winchester. In the decade from 1955 to 1965 alone, 21 new cartridges were introduced.

Several factors influenced the decision-makers at Remington and Winchester. Roy Weatherby's wildcats of the 1940s were achieving commercial status, being loaded by Norma under the Weatherby trademark. The Weatherby Magnum cartridges were getting a lot of publicity, due to both Weatherby's genius for promotion and the fact that they were (and are) excellent rounds. Weatherby had even expanded the line with the .378 Weatherby in 1953.

Warren Page, shooting editor of *Field & Stream*, and Mike Walker of Remington were probably responsible for the appearance and acceptance of the .222 Remington. Page and Fred Huntington of RCBS both felt that the 6mm caliber had potential as a benchrest and hunting round. Page had a wildcat based on the new .308 case necked to 6mm, while Huntington based his 6mm on the .257 Roberts case. Page also touted the 7mm Mashburn, a wildcat based on the .300 H&H case.

Jack O'Connor, shooting editor of *Outdoor Life*, proposed five new cartridges: a .270 or 7mm on the .300 H&H case; a .22 varmint cartridge with a 50 gr. bullet at 3,200 fps; a short cartridge with .270 Win. ballistics for lever-action rifles; and standardization of the .22-250 and .25-'06 wildcats. Elmer Keith had long been promoting the virtues of .338 caliber rounds such as the wildcat .334 OKH.

The new cartridges certainly reflected these influences. Winchester developed a series of belted magnum cartridges designed to fit in standard .30-'06 length actions. Page's and Huntington's 6mm wildcats appeared as the .243 Win. and .244 (later 6mm) Remington.

The magnum-capacity 7mm promoted by Page and

O'Connor appeared as the 7mm Rem. Magnum. In fact, all of O'Connor's predictions came about in the form of the .222 Rem., 7mm Rem. Mag., .284 Win., and the commercial adoption of the .22-250 and .25-'06 by Remington. Keith got his wish with the .338 Win. and .340 Weatherby Magnums.

The Judgement Of History

Rating the success of various cartridges is to some extent subjective, and we certainly do not claim to be the final arbiters. Our opinions are based on tracking rankings from the RCBS list of loading die sales, and from studying firearm catalogues and counting the number of makes and models available in various calibers.

Of the cartridges introduced prior to 1950, the .30-30, .30-'06 and .270 Win. have ranked near the top in popularity for many years. The .30-30 probably leads in factory cartridge sales but lags somewhat in reloading die sales and in the number of rifle models available.

The .30-'06 and .270 have been tremendously popular for decades, and in the face of stiff competition from new cartridges, they show no signs of fading. In the year 2000, when Remington introduced their Model 710 rifle, it was offered in two calibers: .270 and .30-'06.

Other cartridges from the pre-1950 era that have endured include the .45-70, 7mm Mauser, 8mm Mauser, 6.5x55 Swedish Mauser, .30-40 Krag and .303 British. All were at one time military cartridges, and all are useful cartridges in their own right. The .22 Hornet, .220 Swift and .257 Roberts are still available in new rifles.

Actually, cartridges seem never to really disappear, and



Today's new high efficiency cartridges, like the .300 WSM, bring elements of wildcat design to the mainstream market.



The .338 Win. Mag. was introduced in the mid-'50s during a wave of cartridge innovation which occurred as manufacturers sought to bring developments from wildcat cartridges to the commercial market.

pronouncing the death knell of any cartridge is a risky business. Twenty years ago it would have been safe to pronounce the .44 Russian, .45 Schofield, .40-82 Winchester and .40-70 Sharps obsolete, but the growth of cowboy action and black powder centerfire competition has revived these and many others.

The Modern Classics

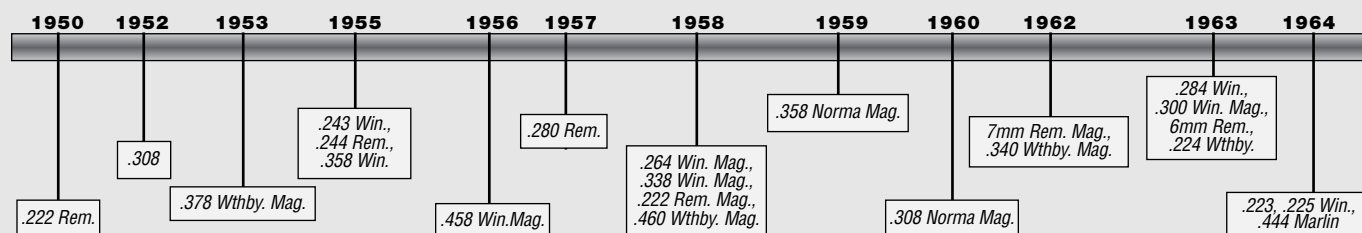
How did the post-World War II cartridges fare? The .223 and .308 have been outstanding successes, joining the .30-30, .270 Win. and .30-'06 on the all-time great list. The .22-

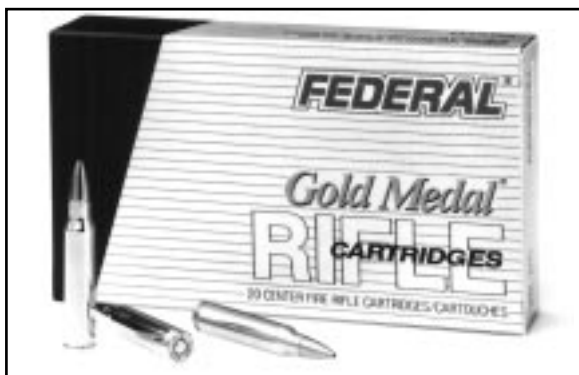
250, .243 Win., 7mm Rem. Mag. and .300 Win. Mag. have also done extremely well. A step behind are several other successes: the .25-'06 Rem., 7mm-08 Rem., .280 Rem. and .338 Win. Magnum.

Occasionally, a group of cartridges might be considered "niche" or "special purpose" cartridges. Due to the nature of their ballistics and intended use, they don't appeal to a large enough market to become big sellers, but they serve certain needs very well. This group includes the .375 H&H Mag., .416 Rem. Mag., .444 Marlin and .458 Winchester. None is likely to ever be a big seller, but all serve the needs of various groups of shooters.

The Weatherby cartridges belong in a class of their own. For many years they were available only in the prestigious and expensive Weatherby rifles, appealing more to the well-to-do sportsman than the average hunter. Only in recent

RIFLE CARTRIDGE INTRODUCTIONS 1950-1989





Top-bottom: Performance isn't the only factor which makes a cartridge successful. Military adoption of the .223, creating both a familiarity with the cartridge and availability of ammunition and components, made the cartridge a huge success despite other cartridges' ballistic superiority. The availability of premium-performance and specialty bullets, like those from Barnes, Swift, Speer and the Winchester Fail Safe, allow cartridge designers to push the performance envelope even further.

slightly greater capacity and longer case neck, is a better cartridge than the .223. The 6mm Rem. has more capacity and better case design than the .243 Winchester. Yet the .222 Rem. Mag. and 6mm Remington are obsolescent or barely hanging on, while the .223 and .243 are thriving.

Military adoption is one key to success. Military cartridges are thoroughly tested, evaluated and developed. Surplus military brass, ammunition and (sometimes) rifles are available at low cost. Soldiers who become familiar with a cartridge in their military service are likely to choose the same cartridge for sporting purposes when they return to civilian life. Cartridges which were adopted by major powers a century ago are still popular — consider the .45-70, .30-40 Krag, 7mm and 8mm Mausers, .303 British and .30-'06.

Sometimes It's The Bullet That Counts

Bullet design can make or break a cartridge's reputation. The .280 Ross (1910) was a cartridge far ahead of its time, with a 145 gr. bullet at 2,900 to 3,000 fps. Bullet manufacturers thought they could use the same jacket and core materials that were suitable at lower velocities. At high velocity, this construction proved inadequate. If the hollow-point Ross bullets got through the rib cage and into the chest cavity, results were spectacular, but if heavy bone was struck, the bullets often blew up.

By contrast, the .270 Win. introduced in 1925 was loaded with excellent bullets from the outset, the 130 gr. Winchester Protected Point expanding and the Western open-point expanding. These were the first bullets loaded by a major company that were designed for high velocity.

Bullet jackets had a thick, heavy base that kept the bullets from blowing up on impact. In the field, hunters found that these bullets gave good expansion, while the heavy base provided good weight retention and adequate penetra-

continued on page 64

years have major companies like Remington and Winchester offered rifles and ammunition in Weatherby calibers. Nonetheless, the .300 Weatherby, the most popular cartridge in the line, has been a success by any standard.

The Survival Of The Fittest

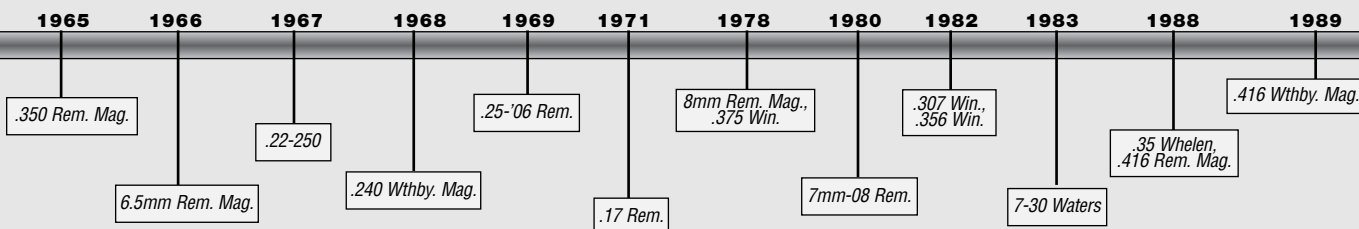
The cartridges introduced from 1950 to 1996 never caught on and seem to be declining in popularity. All have their fans; ammunition for all will no doubt be available for many years. Although new rifles are offered in several of these calibers, it's unlikely any will ever again be on the top five or top 10 list.

Why do some cartridges succeed while others fail? Oddly enough, success or failure does not always reflect ballistic merit. Objectively, the .222 Rem. Mag., with its

Why was there such a dramatic decline in the introduction of new cartridges from 1971 onward? For one reason, it took a few years for the market to absorb and shake out the innovations from the 1960 cycle. So many new cartridges had appeared

that there just weren't many slots left to fill. For another reason, demand for firearms picked up again. The 1968 Gun Control Act cut off the supply of military surplus arms. Fear of further restrictions stimulated demand for all firearms, not just hand-

guns. Rampant inflation in the 1970s made firearms good investments. In the early 1980s, the U.S. economy began a period of strong economic growth, which continued through the end of the century, increasing demand for all consumer goods.



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CARTRIDGE

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tion. Early users of the .270 liked the performance and quite naturally credited the cartridge rather than the bullet design.

Cartridges succeed when they meet the needs of a large number of potential customers. They decline when something comes along that meets the same needs better. Following World War I, the .30-'06 was rapidly becoming America's dominant hunting cartridge. Savage shortened the .30-'06 case to a length that would function in their popular Model 99 rifle and in 1921 introduced the .300 Savage.

With a 150 gr. bullet at 2,700 fps, ballistics were similar to the .30-'06 as it was then loaded for military use. For more than 30 years, the .300 Savage was an extremely popular cartridge. It was made obsolescent by the .308, however, which also functioned in short actions, gave a bit more velocity, and had the advantage of inexpensive surplus military ammunition and brass.

Meeting The Demand

Successful cartridges must meet the needs of a large number of customers. North America does have some big and dangerous game, but most of our hunting is for deer and game of similar size. It's no wonder that cartridges above .30 caliber seldom achieve widespread popularity. The exception in recent decades has been the .338 Win. Mag., likely because habitat changes and the efforts of groups such as the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have increased the opportunity for elk hunting.

Some bore sizes just don't seem to make it. Major manufacturers and wildcatters keep introducing .35-caliber cartridges — the .358 Win., .350 Rem. Mag., .358 Norma Mag., .356 Win. and .35 Whelen. Shooters who actually try these rounds almost invariably rave about them, but they never achieve popular success.

Why not? Maybe the 2,300 to 2,600 fps range of the standard case .35s seems too slow for today's perceptions. On the other hand, crank velocities up to the 3,000 fps range with 250 gr. bullets, as in the wildcat .358 ST Alaskan, and recoil is beyond what most shooters want to handle.

The 6.5mm (.264") and 8mm bores don't get much respect with American hunters either. Winchester's .264 Mag. never caught on, and Remington's effort, the short-cased 6.5mm Rem. Mag., was even less successful. The 8mm Mauser is still loaded by factories only because thousands of surplus military Mausers were imported and sold. Remington's 8mm Mag. was a powerful and effective cartridge — trouble was, hardly anyone wanted it.

The Next Generation

So where are we today? Although the major manufacturers didn't introduce many new cartridges from 1972 to 1996, the wildcatters were busy. New designs should achieve at least one of three things — more

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efficiency, greater accuracy or higher velocity. Higher velocities are more feasible at present than 20 years ago due to one factor — better bullets.

In the 1960s there was just one premium bullet readily available, the Nosler Partition. Now, in addition to the Partition, we have such superb bullets as the Barnes X Bullets, Winchester Fail Safe, Trophy Bonded, Swift A-Frame, Speer Grand Slam and others.

Designers have known for years that the belt on most modern belted magnum cartridges is unnecessary. It was needed for headspacing with the .375 H&H cartridge with its small shoulder area, but not with cartridges that have a substantial shoulder such as the Winchester and Remington magnums. Eliminating the belt has the potential to increase case capacity, improve functional reliability and enhance accuracy.

The beltless .404 Jeffery case has been the base for new cartridge lines, including the Imperial Magnum and Dakota Arms series. The Lazzeroni line uses a beltless case even larger in capacity than the .404 Jeffery. Lazzeroni also developed a line of non-belted short magnum cartridges intended for short actions. Clearly the interest in these proprietary series influenced Remington and Winchester.

The Classics Of Tomorrow

Now we come to the many cartridges introduced after 1997. The .260 Rem., designed by Jim Carmichel, is an accurate and efficient cartridge based on the .308 case. Remington also adopted Layne Simpson's powerful, flat-shooting 7mm STW, based on the 8mm Rem. Mag. case. Remington's new "Ultramag." series is based on the .404 case in calibers 7mm, .300, .338 and .375.

Maximum velocity is the objective of Weatherby's new cartridges, the .30-378 and .338-378. Roy Weatherby was experimenting with the .30-378 as early as 1960 and decided against introducing it. Evidently he felt the recoil was excessive and velocities too high for most bullets then available.

By the '90s, ultra high-velocity .30 and .338 calibers were being promoted by companies such as A-Square. High velocity has always been a Weatherby trademark, and the company no doubt decided that if there was a market for ultra hot cartridges, they wanted a share of it.

The .300 WSM and .376 Steyr approximate the ballistics of existing cartridges (the .300 Win. Mag. and .375 H&H Mag.), but in more compact, efficient cases that function in short actions. No doubt Winchester will announce other caliber cartridges on the same case, possibly a .257, .270 or 7mm WSM, maybe a .338.

It remains to be seen if proprietary cartridge series such as those from Dakota Arms, Lazzeroni and Arnold Arms can withstand competition from major manufacturers.

Competition and modern manufacturing techniques make brass more readily avail

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able at reasonable cost. Reduced costs and reliable suppliers mean companies don't necessarily have to realize huge sales volumes in order to be profitable. Current proprietary cartridge series may not achieve Weatherby-style growth and sales levels, but they don't need to. Moreover, their semi-custom rifles have their own appeal. Just as fans of Weatherby rifles also tend to choose Weatherby calibers, fans of Dakota Arms rifles are likely to select Dakota calibers.

The Cartridge Crystal Ball

What does the future hold for the new cartridges? There is a substantial group of shooters who want the hottest and fastest cartridges possible, who are bored to tears by standard rounds such as .308 and .30-06. To appease this market, look for the 7mm Rem. Ultramag., .300 Rem. Ultramag., and .30-378 Weatherby to achieve outstanding sales.

The 7mm STW may have trouble competing with the 7mm Rem. Ultramag. The two cartridges are ballistically similar, but as loaded by Remington, the Ultramag is a bit faster. It's hard to see how the market can support two nearly identical cartridges, but the slightly hotter, non-belted Ultramag has an edge.

Calibers over .30, as we've seen, seldom achieve broad popularity in the U.S. but are often successful as niche cartridges. The .450 Marlin will be popular with fans of big-bore lever guns. The hot .338s should do quite well. The .375 Rem. Ultramag and .376 Steyr both do things the .375 H&H can't — the Ultramag is faster and the Steyr fits in short actions — but the old Holland & Holland round has beaten back a lot of challengers.

Remington needs to be patient with the .260 Remington. Most deer hunters like light rifles and dislike heavy recoil. The .260 fits their needs but it will take time and word-of-mouth promotion if its going to achieve the success it deserves, just as happened with the excellent 7mm-08.

That leaves the .300 WSM. Winchester may really be on to something here. Shooters today are more accuracy-conscious than ever. They might not need extreme accuracy for big game hunting, but they want it, and benchrest competitors have shown how to get it. Hunters like fairly light rifles, they like flat trajectories and adequate power, and they want reasonable recoil. Of the current top five rifle cartridges according to RCBS 1999 die sales, the .300 Win. Mag. is the most powerful.

With its short, fat powder column and sharp shoulder, the .300 WSM incorporates much of what benchresters have learned about effective cartridge design. It is adapted to compact, lightweight short actions. Ballistically, it duplicates the powerful, flat-shooting .300 Win. Mag., right at the limit of recoil tolerance for the typical hunter. It meets the needs of a lot of shooters, and historically that has been a recipe for success.



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This month's Gun Of The Month prize is an awesome .50 BMG ArmaLite AR-50 rifle. Designed for super-accurate shooting at 1,000 yards or more, this gun is the ultimate in high-tech precision.

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Remington

MODEL 300

*Stylish enough for sporting clays,
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Remington's new stackbarrel lives
up to the name "Ideal."*

BY CHARLES E. PETTY PHOTOS BY BOB MADDOX



ven though the United States is a world leader in firearms, you have to go back awhile to find a great American-made over/under shotgun. Some would say you'd have to go all the way back to Remington's venerable Model 32, which was discontinued at the start of World War II. More than a few trap and skeet shooters were shattered when Remington discontinued the Model 32.

In 1973 Remington introduced the Model 3200, a direct descendent of the 32. It was produced until 1983. Next there was the Peerless from 1993 to 1998 and a slightly more expensive Model 396 whose short life ran from 1996 to 1998. The short production of those last two was due in part to their relatively high cost, along with stiff competition from abroad in the presence of Beretta and the Browning Citori.

Now Remington is back in the fray with the Ideal 300. Remington calls the 300 a *field* gun and says it is the "ideal" combination of style and function. That's something of a departure from the norm of calling new O/U shotguns "sporting," meaning that they are intended primarily for Sporting Clays-type shooting.

For Game & Clays

The 300 is highly versatile. This gun features 28" barrels (26" and 30" versions are also available) and doesn't require a lot of work to get the swing going — or keep it up. The gun balances about 1" forward of the receiver hinge, so it feels a bit muzzle heavy in your hand.

When you swing it, the barrels accelerate quickly. Obviously, there are different opinions on this, but for both game and clays, we like to swing through the target, and this weight combination really works well. The gun weighs 7½ lbs., with about a ¼ lb. difference up or down for the other barrel lengths.

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Top-right: Remington's Model 300 is a field gun that represents the ideal combination of style and function. Bottom: With Rem Choke tubes and lengthened forcing cones, the Ideal features premium performance for a bargain price. Opposite: The hammer-forged barrels are inserted in a mono-block with two locking lugs and twin ejectors.



THE KNIFE & THE GUN



THE NEED FOR PROPER TRAINING IN THE USE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY DEFENSIVE WEAPONS IS PARAMOUNT.

BY STEVE TARANI

Throughout history, warriors and civilians alike have depended upon both primary and secondary weapon systems, as well as their training, both when warring en masse and in personal defense. We can see the balance of long-range weapons and CQB tools even in the elite warrior castes of the Greeks and Romans.

It is the third century BC. The brutally effective battle phalanx of the Macedonian army is comprised of individual warriors, each armed with a sarissa. The sarissa is a heavy spear, varying in length from nine to 21 feet. With its long reach, a sarissa easily pierces the shields and breastplates of any enemy in its deadly path. Although devastating when used by massed ranks of trained infantry, the sarissa is heavy and unwieldy, totally unsuitable for fighting man-to-man. For this purpose, each Macedonian warrior is armed with a small sword called a kopis, which is his primary weapon if the ranks break line and the fighting gets up-close-and-personal.

We travel now to the Roman Empire. The ancient Roman Legions are armed with two pila, short spears, and a sword

called a gladius. Formidable as a Legionaire is, his primary weapon systems are sometimes lost or broken in the course of bloody combat. In such cases, he has the security of knowing that he can rely upon his secondary weapon, the Roman dagger called a pugio, and his superior training.

What the Greek kopis was to the sarissa and the Roman pugio was to the gladius, so too was the French gauche to the sabre, the Spanish daga to the espada, the Scottish dirk to the basket hilt, and the English dagger to the rapier. This system of primary and secondary weapons can be observed in our own modern law enforcement and military units. Spec ops personnel are well-trained and armed with both a primary (carbine, rifle, shotgun or subgun) and a secondary weapon (semiautomatic pistol). You would also be hard-pressed to find any high-speed, low-drag personnel without a tactical knife strapped to some part of his body armor.

The edged weapon has existed for as long as personal combat. During Elizabethan times, a properly trained English gentleman was armed with both his rapier and accompanying dagger, even at the

most formal of social affairs. During the same era, a French magistrate wouldn't be caught dead without his main gauche slung gracefully as an accoutrement to his fine wardrobe.

Today some of us are fortunate enough to live in states that allow citizens to carry concealed handguns as a measure of personal defense. Some, however, are less fortunate in that certain state legislation, an anti-gun county sheriff or local police chief would have you sit defenseless while your family is violated by criminals, rather than enable you to stand strong against the criminal element in self-defense with a firearm.

Even if you own a handgun, is it always on your person? In light of the recent fanaticism of media-blown-out-of-proportion hysteria about "gun safety" with all your guns triple-secured in a solid steel safe, is a firearm always available and immediately accessible for deployment in your home?

Even if you do have your firearm accessible, how trained are you to handle a confrontation with your pri-



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mary weapon system? Unfortunately, most of us lack more than just a handful of hours of formal training every once in a while. Further, how many rounds a week do you send downrange practicing what you have learned? How about in a month or even in a year?

If you think your primary-weapon training is limited, then what about your training with your secondary weapon? How many millions of knife owners do you think are out there, running around with expensive combat folders clipped to their pockets? How many of these have invested even a dime in combative training with their backup?

The solutions are simple. Not unlike the primary and secondary weapon systems of ancient warriors, we assume certain inescapable responsibilities. If you own and intend to operate a primary and secondary weapon system, then you must be duly trained in both systems. Training must include not only safety and operation, but also continual maintenance of

continued on page 81



Spyderco revolutionized "pocket knives" with their one-hand opening hole and convenient clip.

A handgun is Plan A, but you don't always have Plan A on your hip. If you're serious about self-defense, you should obtain training in edged weapons, including unarmed protection as demonstrated by the author.



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New Hunting Rifle From Heckler & Koch

The SLB 2000 is a new semi-automatic hunting rifle from Heckler & Koch. The SLB 2000 is available in 7mmx64, .308, .30-06, 9.3mmx62 and .300 Win. Magnum. Important features include free-floating, hammer-forged barrel, high-strength aluminum alloy receiver, hammer and trigger block safety and varnished select walnut stock and forend. The loosening of a few screws allows the SLB 2000 to be disassembled in a few seconds. Optional accessories include an interchangeable barrel system, two-, five- and 10-round magazines, telescope sight mount and Weaver profile mounting rail. Heckler & Koch, 21480 Pacific Blvd., Sterling, VA 20166, (703) 450-1900, FAX: (703) 450-8160, www.hecklerkoch-usa.com.



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New Hunting Rifles From Lazzeroni Arms

Lazzeroni Arms introduces two new hunting rifles for 2001, the Savage 16LZ and the SAKO TRG-S. The Savage 16LZ features a 24" stainless steel barrel, a synthetic stock and is available chambered for 7.82 (.308) Patriot and 7.21 (.284) Tomahawk. The weight is 6.8 lbs. The SAKO TRG-S has a 26" stainless steel barrel, a synthetic stock and is available chambered for 7.82 (.308) Warbird and 7.21 (.284) Firebird. It weighs 7.9 lbs. Lazzeroni Arms, 1415 S. Cherry Ave., Tucson, AZ 85713, (888) 492-7247, FAX: (520) 624-4250, e-mail: arms@lazzeroni.com, www.lazzeroni.com.



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Pendleton Hunters From Cold Steel

Cold Steel President Lynn Thompson and renowned custom blade maker Lloyd Pendleton have teamed up to design the new Pendleton Hunter series. Both the Pendleton Hunter and Mini Hunter feature hollow ground AUS 8A stainless blades and perfectly contoured synthetic Kraton handles for maximum gripping power and cutting effectiveness. The Hunter's blade measures 3.5" and the Mini is 3". The Secure-Ex synthetic all-weather sheaths are puncture- and cut-resistant. Cold Steel, 3036-A Seaborg Ave., Ventura, CA 93003, (805) 650-8481, FAX: (805) 642-9727, www.coldsteel.com.



Steiner Expands Predator Line

Steiner has expanded its popular line of Predator binoculars to include a number of new models, including the 8x22. The versatile Predators are designed for hunters and outdoor enthusiasts who demand outstanding performance in a compact, rugged and dependable package. The Predator line, which also includes 8x30, 12x40 and 10x42 models, utilizes Steiner's unique



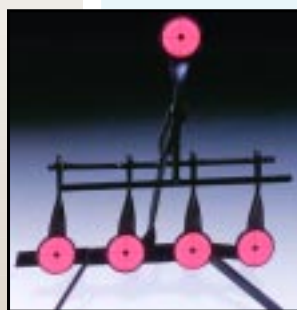
"Game Sensing" lens coating system. This green-tinted coating adds contrast to woodland backgrounds and makes wildlife detection easier. The Predator's excellent light transmission delivers a sharp image in dim light and poor weather conditions. Pioneer Research, 97

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Birchwood Casey's new Gallery Resetting Target for .22 rimfire rifles and handguns delivers uninterrupted shooting pleasure. There is no walking downrange and no cords to pull. Four swinging targets on the bottom swing around and rest on the crossbar when hit.



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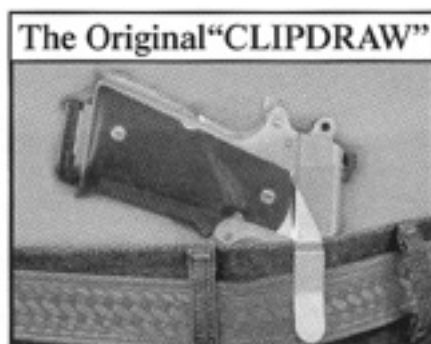
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MODEL 300

continued from page 71

The barrels are in a mono-block. This type of construction simplifies manufacture by making it easier to join and regulate the barrels. A machined steel block has holes for both barrels, tracks for the ejectors and the barrel locking surfaces.

The action locks the barrels with a design Remington calls "modified underlug." A variation of this type of system is found on many O/U shotguns. Remington's has a pair of lugs on either side of the bottom barrel that mate with corresponding cuts in the frame. When the barrels snap shut, two locking bolts in the frame are released to sit, and lock, atop the lugs on the barrel. This takes care of up-and-down stress; another pair on top of the barrel and receiver handles fore-and-aft forces. The top lugs look almost like a styling feature, as the lug on the mono-block fits into a complimentary cut in the receiver.

Getting It Right

Remington has developed a precise and repeatable process for putting everything together. The hammer-forged barrel tubes are inserted in the mono-block, and the side ribs, forend lug and ventilated rib are assembled in a fixture that holds everything in proper alignment. Silver solder is then applied.

This is the best way to join parts like these so the entire fixture passes through what one Remington wag called a "pizza oven." Actually it's much more elegant than that. The oven is precisely temperature-controlled for the type of silver solder being used and filled with inert gas to prevent oxidation. When the conveyor comes out the other side, the barrel unit is solidly together and ready to go on to fitting and finishing operations.

Remington designed their mono-block to put the barrels just a little closer together, which makes things thinner. The barrels also have a slightly thinner outside diameter.

Under the forend the barrel is marked, "light contour — do not modify." We can't imagine why anybody would want to, though. The forcing cones are already lengthened and the barrels are equipped with Rem Choke tubes. There's a nice wide vent rib with two sight beads. It will accept either 2 1/4" or 3" shells and, of course, can be used with steel shot. What needs changing?

When you attach the forend, there is no spring resistance (usually from ejectors) to overcome, so all you have to do is align the hinge areas of both receiver and forend and snap it in place. There is no slop.

When you open the barrels of an O/U shotgun, a certain amount of the work you do is used to cock the hammers. Each hammer has a push rod, and when the barrel is fired, the rod moves forward to contact a part of the forend.

Remington has made the rods more robust and there is a specially hardened, replaceable part of the forend iron that does

the cocking job. This is a typical wear area for guns that are shot extensively, but this design should be very durable, and if it *does* wear, is easily replaced. Another nice feature is the latch. It's big enough to get a finger in there without ripping off your nail.

On Target

The single trigger is a mechanical design that does not depend on recoil to go to the next barrel. This is not unusual, but the safety itself looks a little different. It is a typical tang-mounted sliding safety, which is engaged when pulled to the rear. Pushing forward — something completely natural when you mount the gun — disengages the safety and makes it ready to fire.

"We can't imagine why anyone would want to modify the 300. The forcing cones are already lengthened, and it is equipped with Rem Choke tubes and a nice wide vent rib with two sight beads. What needs changing?"

Atop the safety is a lever for barrel selection. More commonly, the whole safety moves left or right to pick the first barrel, but Remington's is mounted on the safety itself. It is positive and snug — unlikely to be inadvertently changed. While we have come to expect being able to select barrels and would surely scream if we couldn't, we suspect that, in this day of interchangeable chokes, the option is not used all that much.

The finish is a very nicely polished blue — something we don't see much anymore — with a small amount of machine-engraved scrollwork on both sides and on the bottom of the receiver.

Stock and forend are American walnut with 20 lpi checkering. The wood is a nice straight-grain walnut, finished with a satin synthetic material. We've seen a number of these guns, and the quality of the wood is very consistent from one to the next. In short, the Remington Ideal 300 is an ideal O/U indeed.



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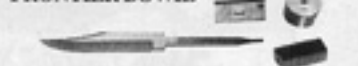
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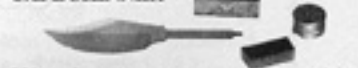
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Made from 440C Stainless Steel

MONARCH

Overall length 7", blade 4 1/8"

SS262 Gut Hook Blade\$8.70

TUNDRA

Overall length 7", blade 2 3/4"

SS260 Tundra Blade\$8.70

KODIAK

Overall length 6 1/8", blade 2 1/2"

SS261 Kodiak Blade\$8.10

THE SHARK

Overall length 5 1/2",
blade length 2 7/8", 2
3/4"

SS176 Shark Blade\$8.95

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serrated part of the blade is 2 3/4" long.

SS502 Dinner Fork\$5.95

Overall length is 7 1/4", it is 1" wide at the
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SS503 Dinner Spoon\$5.95

Overall length is 7 1/4", it is 1 1/2" wide at the
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SECONDARY

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both skills and materials.

Training with a firearm today is considered "unsociable," thanks to the liberal media and its bourgeois supporters. To those of us who value personal integrity, independence and our freedom, which was paid for in blood by all the veterans of this nation, a firearm is more than just a symbol of that integrity and honor. It is a tool and an implement of defense. It is our responsibility as gun owners to train with those implements of defense.

An additional burden is placed upon us to carry the torch of our forefathers in exemplary behavior and responsibility with these time-honored implements.

Even less emphasis is placed upon the ownership and training for personal defense with our backup weapon. Learning how to defend yourself with an edged weapon is a very un-PC act, but one that could save your life.

Do you own a combat folder? Do you carry it on your person? Why? For opening boxes, letters, skinning a deer? Or possibly for personal defense? Do you consider it a backup to your pistol? If you don't carry a gun, is a combat folder your primary weapon? How you answer these questions determines the type and amount of training you should seek.

If you stood elbow-to-elbow in an ancient Roman legion, marching with your gladius drawn and shield raised, if you strode into the fray of battle, you would have nothing to rely on but your equipment and your training. The same is true today. It boils down to the two most important aspects of any weapons systems in any era—hardware and training.

The Legionnaire trained hard to hone his swordsmanship to a peak level, knowing his very survival depended on his skill-at-arms. So should you. Training is far more important than how expensive or exotic your trendy combat folder might be. Facing a street punk with a carpet knife is no time to discover you don't know the three most basic knife fighting techniques that could save your life, all of which could have been learned in a weekend seminar. If you carry a knife with even the remotest thought of ever using it for self-defense, get training. It's that simple.



The author is the edged weapons training supervisor at Gunsite as well as a POST-certified edged weapons instructor in several states. He offers seminars and training programs to qualified civilians and law enforcement personnel throughout the United States. Interested readers may contact him at (949) 252-1962 for additional information.

INSIDER

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Ruger

Cowboy aficionados will love the traditional looks of the new Vaquero with Bird's Head grips, available in both blue and stainless — chambered in .45 Colt, of course. For deer hunters, Ruger has introduced the 99/44 semi-auto in .44 Mag. — check out our review in this issue for more details.



Sako

"Tough but light" is the motto of the new FinnLight Model 75 rifle, which features a fluted barrel and a lightweight synthetic stock. It is available in calibers from .22-250 to .300 Win. Magnum.

Sure Fire

Those high-intensity flashlights are great, but they sure drain batteries quickly. Enter the 10x Dominator, which features two-heads-in-one to provide a power-saving 60 lumen working lamp and a 500 lumen tactical light.



Walther

Shooters and police agencies who want the quality of a Walther and the simplicity of a DAO can now have both in the new Walther P990 pistol — a double-action-only version of the P99 — available in 9mm and .40 S&W.

Weatherby

The new Super Predator Master is designed for varmint hunters who go after coyote, fox, bobcat and other large predators that require a bit more power. The gun, with a 24" Krieger cryo-treated, fluted barrel, is available in calibers from .223 to .308.



Winchester

Sure, the Model 9410 is designed for cowboy matches, but who wouldn't have fun shooting a lever-action .410 shotgun with a 10-round magazine?



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SPOTLIGHT On The BIG SHOW

Industry insiders know that January is the month for news from the gun world. Why? Because that's when the industry's largest trade show, the SHOT Show, is held, where manufacturers unveil the new products you'll be dreaming about throughout the rest of the year.

The 2001 SHOT Show was chock full of model variations and updated features, but actual "new products" were few and far between. Of course, with over 1,500 exhibits on the mile-long show floor, we can't promise we saw everything, but we can give you an extremely arbitrary and subjective overview of some of the more noteworthy introductions which were on display at SHOT.



Black Hills

With cowboy shooting reviving interest in .32 H&R revolvers, Black Hills is now offering the cartridge in their western line, with a 90 gr. FPL bullet loaded to 750 fps.

Heckler & Koch

HK has added a semi-auto tactical shotgun to its line of Fabarm pump 12 ga. guns. The gun features a low-recoil, gas-actuated operating system, and functions with all 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and 3" shot shells.

LaserGrips/Crimson Trace

If you like to shoot your S&W J-frame more than you carry it, the new Combat Overmold is for you. This larger grip includes the company's signature side-mounted laser sight, but gives you a little extra finger real estate, allowing you to get your whole hand involved in controlling the recoil of your .357 AirLite Ti.



Les Baer Super Varmint

The Ultimate AR Super Varmint is a flat-top rifle with a Jewell trigger, a hand-lapped, cryo-treated stainless 20" barrel, custom-designed stock and all-weather finish guaranteed to shoot 1/2 MOA or less for under \$2,000. Need we say more?

Marlin

Cowboys who enjoy long-range shooting will want to check out the new Model 1895 Cowboy .45-70 with its 26" barrel. Hunters who like handy leverguns may find new favorites in the Model 1895 GS stainless steel Guide Gun in .45-70, and the .30-30 Model 336CC with stock and forend finished in Mossy Oak camo.

Remington

Big Green's Model 710 is a ready-to-go deer rifle for novice hunters that comes with a Bushnell scope, factory-mounted and bore-sighted. At the other end of the spectrum, the Model 700 Titanium is designed for those who hunt nature's extremes, tipping the scale at just over 5 lbs. with its titanium receiver, fluted bolt and stainless barrel.

continued on page 81

DOIN' THE NUMBERS

2.31 percent

Number of the 398 shooters in the 2000 USPSA national championships who used .45 ACP-chambered pistols in the competition. The most popular caliber was .38 Super, used by over 41 percent of shooters.

Source: Jan./Feb. Front Sight newsletter

91.43 percent

Number of competitors in the USPSA competition who participated using 1911-style guns.

0.5 percent

Number of USPSA competitors whose 1911 guns had the "Colt" emblem on the side.

QUOTE of the MONTH:

"In a democracy, citizens are supposed to act as partners in enforcing laws. Those forced to follow rules without being trusted even for a moment are, in fact, slaves."

— Jaron Lanier, Discover Magazine, Feb. '01. Lanier was referring to new "end-to-end" copy-right-protection technology which allows computers, stereos or TVs to detect and block unregistered material — but the sentiment is equally true of gun control.

A LOCK ON THE MARKET

Did, can I borrow the keys to the gun? These days, some guns come with internal locking devices that render the firearm inoperable with a twist of a key. Taurus was one of the pioneers in this field. S&W has committed to having such a system included in all their new guns within the next few years.

This year, several more companies are coming on-line with this concept. Remington's new 710 rifle — designed for novice shooters, remember — includes the ISS "Integrated Security System" which utilizes a specialty key to lock the bolt in the open position, making the gun impossible to fire.

HK has also introduced the "Lock-Out

Safety Device" for its USP pistol — this is a modular unit that replaces the pistol's lanyard loop, and, when engaged, blocks movement of the hammer and strut. Springfield Armory offers a similar device, the Integrated Lock System (or ILS), on their 1911 "Loaded" pistols. The unit replaces the standard mainspring housing.



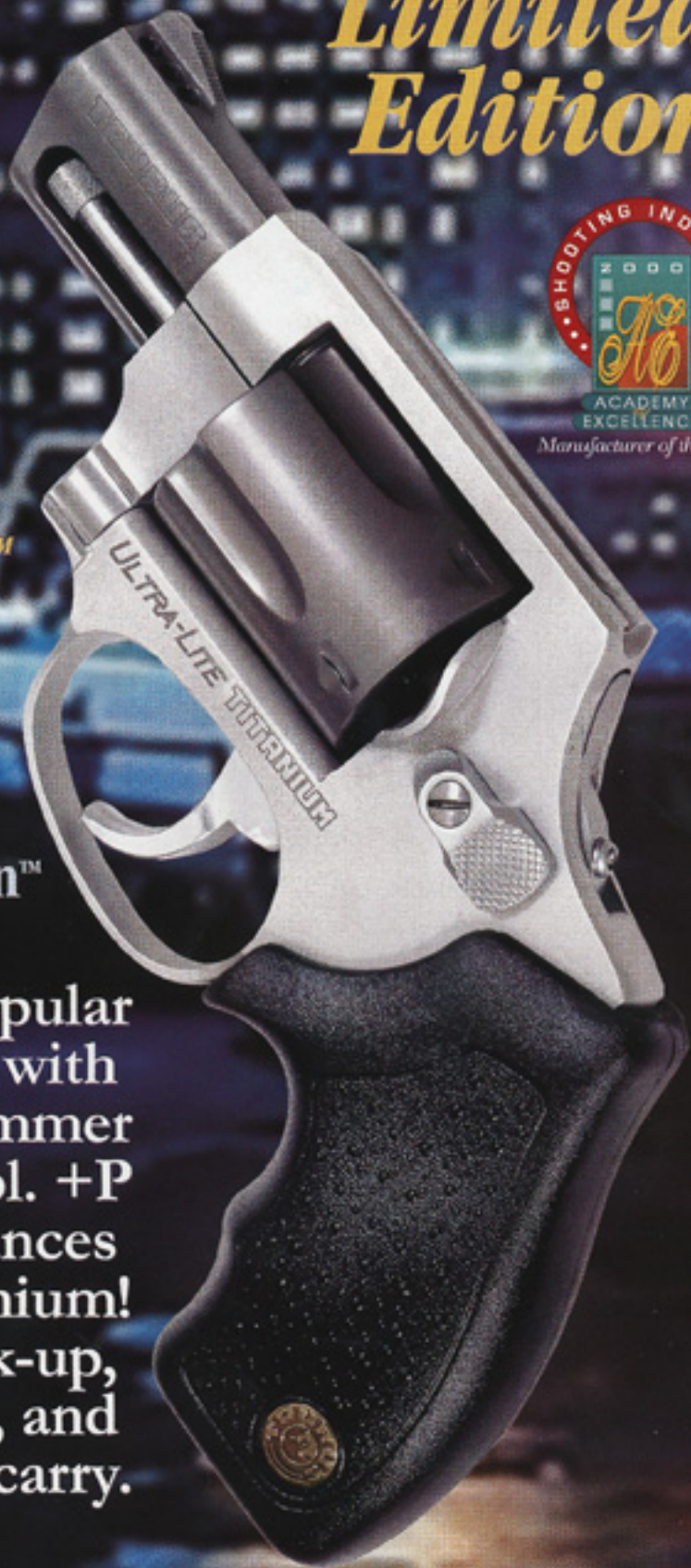
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