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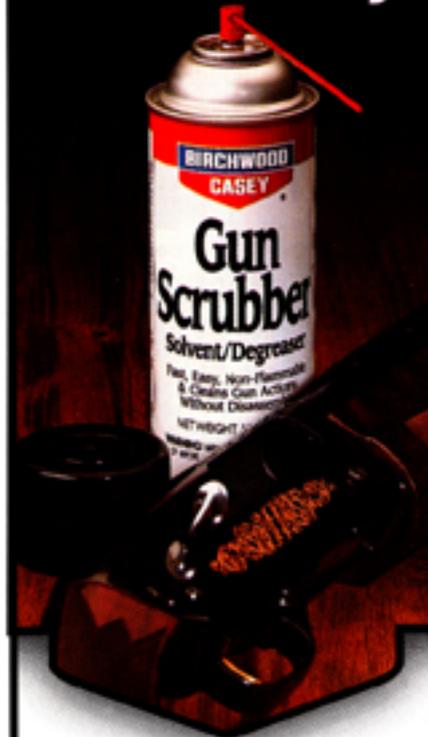


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“Our kids today are the targets of a dedicated effort on the part of many in the teaching profession and elsewhere to turn them against firearms and the shooting sports.”

Legacies

From time to time I take great pleasure in retrieving the tiny rifle from its resting place in the gun safe. A Stevens No. 14 ½ “Little Scout,” it’s just one of the myriad of different model boy’s rifles produced at Chicopee Falls. However, this one is special. It was a gift from “Grandpa Bill” to a little squirt of a boy who at the time of this gift was many years from being able to use it.

I was less than one year old when Grandpa Bill placed the tiny Stevens in my Father’s hands with strict instructions to give it to me when the time was right.

Bill was not a wealthy man, and the rifle is certainly not a fancy one. As it happened, I never really had the opportunity to know him. I was four years old, living many states away from Bill’s home in Cullison, Kansas when he was called to his reward.

Even without the rifle, I would have been fascinated to hear the tales my Mother shared of Bill Greenstreet. He was a big hulk of a man. Every photo but one shows him in his usual attire of bib-overalls and a rough shirt. His passion was for the woods and for hunting.

Raccoon was the “big-game” of his part of Kansas in the ’30s. He pursued the little masked-



bandits with a couple of much loved hunting hounds. I suspect that his goal was as much to enjoy the warmth of a cheery campfire with his cronies rather than to bring home another raccoon for skinning and stretching.

One recurring tale is of Grandpa Bill and a lost hound. On several occasions, a hound would follow trail so enthusiastically that he was soon far from the following hunters. Bill would wait as long as he could on the trail, and then, with the sun far risen and chores

continued on page 60



Right to left: Dear family friend Roy Miller, Bill Greenstreet, and the girl with the harmonica is Norma Lee Shilling. One day she will have to put up with a son just as taken with guns, dogs and hunting as “Grandpa Bill.”

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are custom made with more and finer bristles than lesser brands. The belt-pack cases are made of ballistic nylon, with heavy duty zippers. The Bore Obstruction Removers are designed to avoid deforming a stuck bullet and will gently force it out of the bore with multiple taps from the Memory-flex rod. The Memory flex rod is nylon coated, aircraft-grade cable with compression welded fittings that will support over a quarter ton of pull force!

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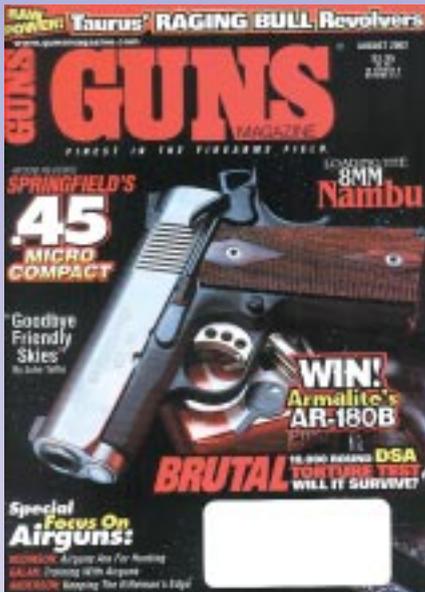
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LETTER OF THE MONTH



GUNS MAGAZINE AUGUST 2002

President George W. Bush
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. President:

The attached article from *GUNS* Magazine, August 2002, pretty much sums up the sorry state of affairs of our airline industry.

The airlines will never recover financially if the "security" charade is allowed to continue.

In the meantime, I agree wholeheartedly with John Taffin, author of *Campfire Tales*. I also will not fly again and be forced to relinquish personal freedoms, and worse, be treated as a potential terrorist.

Sincerely,
Charles W. Brown
Rescue, Calif.

Make Mine A Lightweight

Massad Ayoob's review of the Springfield Micro Compact .45s all but dismissed gun weight as a factor to consider for concealed carry.

Steel frame autoloaders in this size range are overly heavy for the role. CCWP holders buy compact guns for convenient carry and a lightweight alloy frame is an integral part of the package. Springfield would do well to drop the steel frame and produce an alloy "mil-spec" and "fancy" version.

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

I would like to see a basic aluminum framed Micro Compact with only one other change, a compact beavertail safety.

The non-extended thumb safety is less likely to be moved off safe in the thumb-break paddle holsters I prefer. CCWP holders have to take their gun off regularly at Post-Offices, government buildings, schools and other restricted areas. Being able to stash a holstered single action autoloader with a safety strap between hammer and slide is a definite safety concern.

Ralph McLaney
Brandon, Miss.

X-treme Duty Leather

Great magazine and a superb article from Petty and Ayoob on the pro's and con's of the new Springfield XD.

I've been carrying one for about six months now, and also had a difficult time finding a holster that fit properly. After searching for some months, I found that High Noon Holsters has been producing wet formed holsters for the HS2000 and XD for some time.

High Noon offers low price, excellent quality, and fast turn-around for what I consider a "custom" holster for the XD. They may be reached at [727] 786-7528, or www.highnoonholsters.com.

I thought *GUNS* Magazine readers should know this info so they can spend more time carrying this excellent firearm.

Keep up the good work!

Jim Agrian
Kennett Square, Pa.

J.T. Is On The Money

Sometimes I do not agree with John Taffin, but he is entitled to his opinions. The August *Campfire Tales* concerning this country's airlines, however, is exactly right.

Because of the turmoil around airports I never did like to fly, but had no choice because of the work I did. Now I'm retired and wouldn't fly if the airlines were paying me.

Leland B. Green
Island Park, Idaho

Corrected Attribution

Massad Ayoob, in his *Handguns* column "Seemed Like A Good Idea At The Time,"

invoked: "Frank Lloyd Wright's dictum: form follows function."

Just thought I'd point out that the dictum was coined by a different American architect, Louis Sullivan, the father of the skyscraper, in his 1896 article, "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered."

Thanks for listening.

Gerald Fried
Corona, Calif.

The Human Element

I am not a regular reader of your magazine but felt compelled to write about the content of your July 2002 issue.

Three articles stood above the rest of your quality writing. The published letter from Herb Richardson, the interview with Mikhail Kalashnikov by David and Emily Fortier, and John Taffin's *Campfire Tales* column all departed from the usual technical discussion of firearms and their use to talk about human beings.

While I am as much an equipment enthusiast as anyone, and most of my hobbies are based in that worship and love of our toys, human relationships are what life is really all about. I have moved away from several hobbies when the human elements of friendship and camaraderie did not materialize.

Kalashnikov's discussions clearly illustrate him as not only a mechanical designer, but foremost as a soldier and patriot devoted to his country and his people.

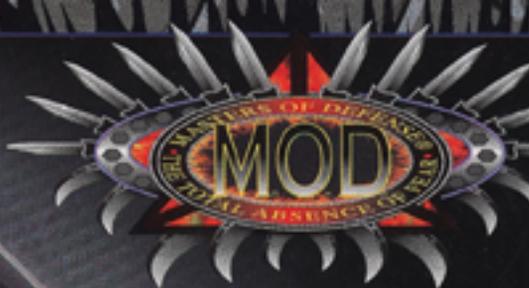
Mr. Richardson's father was no shooter, but indulged his son's shooting interests to teach him many important facets of life, a role Mr. Richardson is reprising to his children and grandchildren.

Taffin's column reminded us that the changes and challenges of everyday life have the potential to place any of us in the role of a hero, and that those hero's responsibilities are huge.

These reflections on our most important human character elements are far more important than any technical information you might print. Thanks for taking the time and space to publish something a little outside the traditional box and remind us all about those things that are really important in life. How our fellow citizens, shooters and others, deal successfully with those really important parts of life is what makes our nation what it is today.

Sincerely,
William L. Powell III
Via e-mail

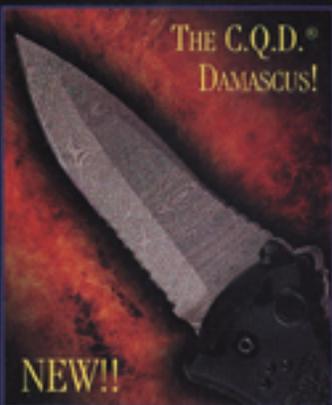




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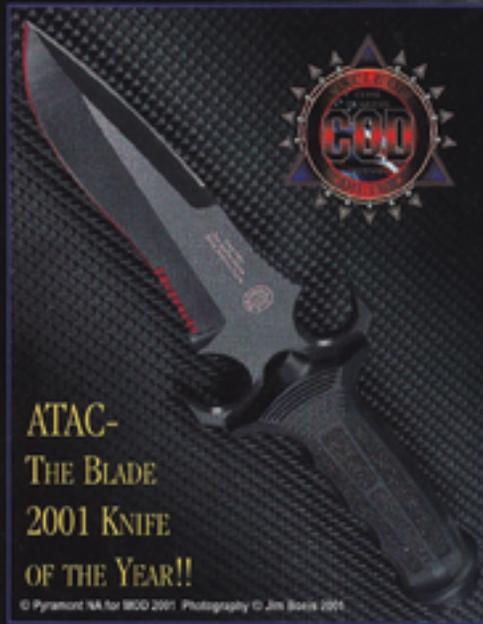
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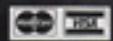
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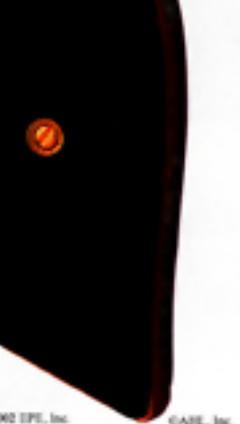
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Barely two years after making his first recordings at Memphis' Sun Studio, Elvis was a box office smash. "Love Me Tender" premiered in late 1956 at New York's Paramount Theatre, where the assembled press and throngs of fans held court outside the theatre, hoping for a glimpse of America's new superstar. The film debuted in the number two position at the box office, earning its cost back in only a few days. Elvis later starred in two more Western films, "Flaming Star" and "Charro!," thought by many to be highlights of his film career. No other American entertainer in history has ever achieved the success Elvis enjoyed in his celebrated multi-media career.

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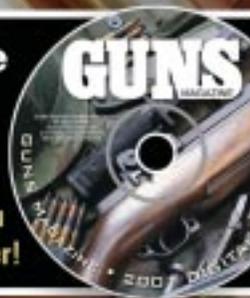
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HANDLOADER

BY CHARLES E. PETTY

Charles E. Petty began his handloading career at the age of 15 with the purchase of a used Lyman Tru-Line Jr. press. Forty-five years after loading that first .38 Special cartridge, Charlie remarks, "It's a lot of fun."

Redding Shell Holders

"The problem, you see, is that everyone who makes shell holders has a different numbering scheme. Now if you make sure to never buy a different brand you will probably learn the system."

Shell holders are a real pet peeve of mine. I have literally dozens of the things scattered hither and yon on the bench but the one I need never seems to be there. Or, I'm trying to use a Redding No. 3 for the .308 when everyone in the world knows this needs the No. 1. Unless, of course, you have an RCBS shell holder — then No. 3 is peachy.

The problem, you see, is that everyone who makes shell holders has a different numbering scheme. Now if you make sure to never buy a different brand you will probably learn the system. Nobody liked my suggestion that everyone use the same numbering system. Well, actually one of them did as long as it was *their* system.

And of course, even though I've got a bunch of shell holders, there are just a few that get used regularly. Redding has come up with a neat little kit of six shell holders which will match up to about 75 percent of the most commonly loaded cartridges.

And they have also made a most welcome design change. The shell holder now has just a bit of a bevel at the mouth so you don't have to get the case perfectly straight for it to slip in. Redding calls it, "E-Z Feed." It is a better mousetrap.

Oops!

As I'm sure you know, the .45 ACP is one of my favorite cartridges and I am always trying to find loads that shoot better. Not long ago I set up the new RCBS Pro 2000 progressive to load .45s. I had just received some new Hornady 230 grain FMJs and wanted to see if a couple of hardball loads I've been working with would do well with the Hornady bullets.

Setting up any progressive loader isn't difficult but it must

be done in a logical order just as the cartridge goes around the various loading stations. It takes a couple of pieces of brass but my practice is to adjust the sizing die first to size just as much of the case as possible.

You simply do this by screwing the die down to the point where it just barely touches the shell plate. Lock it down because this will not change.

The next station is the expander die. The position of the die body itself is not critical and I usually set it to be about 1/4 inch above the shell plate when the ram is up. That adjustment can be locked down too. Then screw the stem of the expander up until it won't contact a case. Now, gradually lower it.

You'll feel the main body of the expander go into the case long before any bell is formed. At this point, I will take the bullet I want to load and begin trying it in the case mouth and adjusting the stem down in small increments until the bullet will just sit in the case mouth without tipping over.

It really doesn't take a big bell to do this and we want to expand the case no more than absolutely necessary, which will greatly extend brass life.

The final step is to seat and crimp the bullet. New dies for autoloader cartridges have a taper crimp built in. Some years ago I did an extensive blind test to see if there was any detrimental effect on accuracy by seating and crimping in the same die compared to a separate crimp die. There was none.

So, on this particular day, I adjusted for correct overall length, eyeballed the crimp, and proceeded to load ammo.

Imagine my surprise when I got to the range and none of the rounds would chamber. It was quite obvious — then — that the case wasn't crimped enough to remove all the previous expansion of the case mouth.

Measurement at home showed they were only a few thousandths oversize, but it might as well have been a mile. The ammo was salvaged by running it through a separate crimp die.

I made a greenhorn mistake. And all this proves no amount of experience can overcome failure to check things out. The solution was to put a taper crimp die in the last station and an old barrel nearby for a gauge. In this particular case the extra die just makes adjustment a little easier.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it.



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RIFLEMAN BY DAVE ANDERSON

At 14, Dave Anderson acquired his first centerfire rifle — a .303 Lee Enfield — with which he took his first whitetail. Despite a distinguished record in competitive pistol shooting, the sporting rifle remains Dave's first love.

Weaver Grand Slam Scopes

Weaver Grand Slam scopes are designed to be competitive in quality with the better American and European brands but at a lower cost. Introduced in 2000, this line has rapidly earned an excellent reputation. I've done considerable shooting with two samples, a 6-20x40 and a 3-10x40.

Both scopes are finished in an attractive, non-reflective matte black. Everything about them — their handsome appearance, their smooth, precise power and focusing adjustments and their solid heft — gives the impression of a quality product. They easily passed the usual dunk/freeze tests.

Actually sticking a scope in a deep freeze isn't a very severe test as most freezers aren't very cold. Try a North Dakota winter at 20 below zero.

Optics are excellent, with low-light performance particularly impressive. Lenses are fully multi-coated for improved clarity. My primitive (but effective) device for testing resolution is a sheet of newspaper with print of varying sizes stapled to a target frame.

With the scoped rifle sitting solidly on a rest, it's easy to check resolution at various distances and under different light conditions. Both center and edge resolution of the Grand Slam optics is exceptionally good.

I own several scopes from top European makers. The European optics appear to have a slight advantage in resolution in low-light conditions, but the margin is extremely small. Of course we don't buy scopes to read newsprint. In terms of ability to identify and aim at a game animal or target there is no practical difference. These Weaver optics are truly impressive.

Micro-Trac Four Point System

When it comes to reliability and durability of sight adjustment, the Weavers take a back seat to none. It's no secret that other top scope makers would dearly love to purchase the rights to Weaver's patented, super-reliable Micro-Trac system. First developed in the '70s for metallic silhouette shooters, the Micro-Trac system has been continually refined.

Adjustment knobs allow the rifle to be sighted in at, say, 100 yards and then reset to zero. The knobs can be easily turned with the fingers (no need for tall, vulnerable target knobs) for those shooters who prefer to dial in elevation and windage for each shot, rather than holding over or using "Kentucky windage."

Adjustments proved to be accurate and repeatable. Dial in four minutes of vertical and two minutes of horizontal adjustment

and that is what you get. It's fun to run the groups around the target at will, then set the dials back to zero and be right back at original point of aim.

The 6-20x40 Grand Slam has an adjustable objective lens to allow focusing (from 15 yards to infinity) and eliminate parallax at different ranges. The 6-20x Weaver was fitted first to a Remington 700 VS .22-250, later to a Les Baer .223 rifle. The 3-10x model was fitted to a second upper receiver system in .223 Ackley Improved built by Insight Shooting Systems, Inc., which interchanges on the Les Baer lower receiver. These are three very accurate rifles, with five-shot groups usually running around 1/2 MOA.

SPECIFICATIONS: WEAVER GRAND SLAM SCOPES		
	6-20 x 40	3-10 x 40
Length	14.25"	11.875"
Weight	17.75 oz.	13.0 oz.
Eye relief	3.0 to 2.75"	3.5 to 3.0"
Field of view	16.5 to 5.25 <i>(feet at 100yards)</i>	11.3 to 3.5 <i>(feet at 100yards)</i>

Other Features

Adjustment turrets are centered in the straight portion of the scope tube, allowing maximum latitude in mounting. That means they can be fitted to most rifle actions and positioned for comfortable eye relief without having to use special extension rings.

Focus for individual eyesight is easily set by rotating the eyepiece. Power rings (and the objective lens on the 6-20x) are of ribbed, soft rubber construction for a positive grip. Magnification and distance markings are on the rear surfaces of the rings, easily seen by the shooter with the rifle in shooting position. These adjustments turned smoothly even in very cold weather.

Eye relief of the 3-10x scope is 3.5 inches at the lower end of the power range, 3.0 inches at the top. For the 6-20x scope, eye relief is from 3.0 to 2.75 inches. On a rifle with heavy recoil, such as my light .340 Weatherby, I'm happier with a full 4 inches of eye relief, just in case a shot has to be taken at an awkward angle and the eye gets a little too close. However on rifles for which these power ranges are appropriate, eye relief is more than adequate.

Since I wanted the 6-20x scope primarily for target shooting, it was ordered with a fine crosshair/dot reticle that permits very precise aiming on paper in normal light conditions. In dim light or against a cluttered background, this reticle is a bit too fine, at least for my eyes.

If your primary use is hunting, the Truplex Dot reticle would be a better choice. The 3-10x (and all other Grand Slam scopes) has a Truplex reticle (i.e. thick outer/fine center crosshairs).

The Weaver Grand Slam series are first-rate scopes and at current prices they are terrific values. I appreciate quality and don't object to paying a fair price to get it. But getting quality at a price significantly less than the competition is especially satisfying.



Below (top-bottom): Weaver Grand Slam 6-20x40 scope mounted on Les Baer Ultimate Varminter. Attractive, modern design is matched by excellent performance. Magnification numbers on the power ring are easily seen by the shooter with the rifle shouldered — a very good feature.



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SHOTGUNNER BY HOLT BODINSON

Woods-wise at the age of 9, Holt Bodinson's first shotgunning experiences involved chasing rabbits with a 12-bore Stevens single barrel. His advice to the beginning shotgunner: "You must have a gun that fits you well."

Some Other Shotgunning Games

"In our ever shrinking world, the short range qualities of shotgun pellets mean we don't need big ranges and lots of space to enjoy our sport."

Standard skeet or trap fields, creatively used, put the fun and zest back into shotgunning.

If you're burned out on trap, skeet and conventional sporting clays, don't get depressed. The shotgunner's mind is very inventive. More shotgun-fun games have been created than most people realize. It might take some searching to find a course or club that offers them, or even a piece of land where one can set up a trap or two, but it's well worth the effort if it means putting the fun back in your shooting.

What makes shotgun gaming so easy is a combination of the gun and the target.

In our ever shrinking world, the short range qualities of shotgun pellets mean we don't need big ranges and lots of space to enjoy our sport. Add to this factor a flying clay pigeon that can be tossed at any height and from any direction and the games you can play are limited solely by your imagination. Here are just a few of the fun games shotgunners have developed.

Quail Walk

The "hunter," fully loaded, strolls down a path while either manual or automatic traps toss "quail" in various directions at different altitudes. Of course, the shooter is unaware of when a "quail" is going to flush. A more casual variation of this game requires a partner with a hand trap and a bag of clays.

Walking behind the gunner, the partner flips clays to the right, left and over the head of the shooter. Just

make sure the hand trap operator is proficient. Getting hit from behind with a hand tossed clay is no fun and leads to brief friendships, or worse.

Simulated Live Pigeon Shoot

Have you ever wondered why a certain brand of clay pigeons carries the name "Blue Rock?" Well, the Lincolnshire Blue Rock pigeon raised in Lincolnshire, England was considered the best-of-the-best when it came to live bird targets. Greener once described it:

"as affording the best sport and much the hardest to kill; being small in body, quick in flight at starting, tough in nature, and game to the death — especially the hens."

Live pigeon shoots are becoming as rare as hens' teeth, but thanks to our English brothers there is a shooting game that resembles the real sport. The simulation consists of a reusable white marker that is attached to the underside of a conventional clay pigeon. Once the clay is released, the shooter must break the clay and drop the marker within the prescribed boundary fence.

Rabbit Run

This little fun run requires a trap house and a trap adjusted to throw conventional clays as close to the ground as possible. The shooter stands on or directly behind the trap house and lets fly at 25 skimming bunnies darting out in all directions.

Red Baron Shoot

I've never seen this one performed, but the object is to down a small, remote controlled airplane. If you've ever seen the erratic, stunt flying a skilled radio controller can perform, you'll appreciate how difficult this shoot can be. The targets are rather expensive, and that's why the "Red Baron" is used as a premier fund raiser.

Follow The Leader

Here's a great elimination game. Shot either on a skeet or trap range, or a combination of both, "Follow the Leader" starts with shooters drawing lots to determine the shooting order. The first gunner specifies the nature of the shot he will attempt — and the instructions can be pretty creative.

If he makes his chosen shot, the next shooter must attempt the same shot and so on down the line. If a shooter misses, he or she is eliminated. The cycle goes on and on until there is only one shooter left standing.

And, yes, there are more — it only takes a bit of imagination. So round up your shooting cronies and put some fun and zest back into your shotgunning.





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Five Coues deer threaded their way across the fabric of a rugged Arizona hillside. Now you see them, now you don't. Gray forms blending with Southwestern foliage and broken rock in that land's unfinished mountains. A mature buck stopped to attack a browse plant, distance 261 yards — spot on. The rangefinder said so.

I shuffled out of my pack frame, slipped the daypack off, rested the Ruger M-77 across the vertical struts of the frame, power ring of the Swarovski scope screwed up to 10x, eyepiece focused on the hill — I was ready. Winchester's latest 150 grain .308 round was a shoo-in for

nearest sporting goods shop: affordable, user-friendly, and above all laser-accurate. The first rangefinder I got my hands on was all of these things and I loved it, quickly proving to myself that it was a viable instrument exceeding advertised claims. But better things were yet to come in smaller packages.

The downsized model I had that day for Coues deer was a Bushnell Yardage Pro Compact 600, ideal for hunting with plenty of distance capability in a lightweight, easy-to-carry package. Operable with cover in place, it proved a genuine asset in the field.

RANGEFINDER

Fadala, who practically lives how the laser rangefinder

a perfect strike at that distance. Couldn't miss. Pow!

I missed. No excuses. Wind nil, no sun in my eyes, rifle rested. Thought I'd squeezed the trigger carefully. But I missed.

The two bucks in the group led the race. The larger one, a fine example of a trophy desert whitetail, pulled a length ahead of his small-antlered brother, two does and one fawn trailing behind. Into an ocotillo thicket burst the big boy first. A 30-foot window offered a shot as the buck ran through it — an ethical target — swing ahead, squeeze the trigger with muzzle in motion.

Crack! Got him. But the bucks had swapped places in the ocotillos. Old, going downhill fast, rack receded, he was all mine, the smallest-antlered Coues deer I've ever taken. Oh, well. The experience was great and so was the eating.

New Hunting Tool

I hunt with it all: recurve bow, muzzleloader, open-sighted .30-30. This time I carried a 21st century outfit. My B&L 10x42s found the deer and I had an accurate scoped rifle shooting superior ammo. But it was the rangefinder that sealed the envelope, telling me just how far the shot would be.

Once associated only with tank commanders and other military personnel, the rangefinder is today as close as the

Using the rangefinder is as simple as looking through binoculars. A good trick with both rangefinder and binoculars is to steady them using a walking stick.

“Once associated only with tank commanders and other military personnel, the rangefinder is today as close as the nearest sporting goods shop: affordable, user-friendly, and above all laser-accurate.”



Ending The Guessing Game

Everyone will have his own reasons for employing a rangefinder. Mine took roots in Wyoming one afternoon as I hunted with my friend Bob Hodgdon.

"How far is that cliff?" Bob asked.

I shaded my eyes; squinted like a man with a divining rod; and proclaimed the distance exactly 250 yards to a boulder where moments before stood a mule deer buck we did not want.

"OK, how far is the fence line over there?" he asked. Again with confidence I said 175 yards. I was wrong on

both distances. The boulder on the cliff was less than 200 yards away, the fence line the same distance.

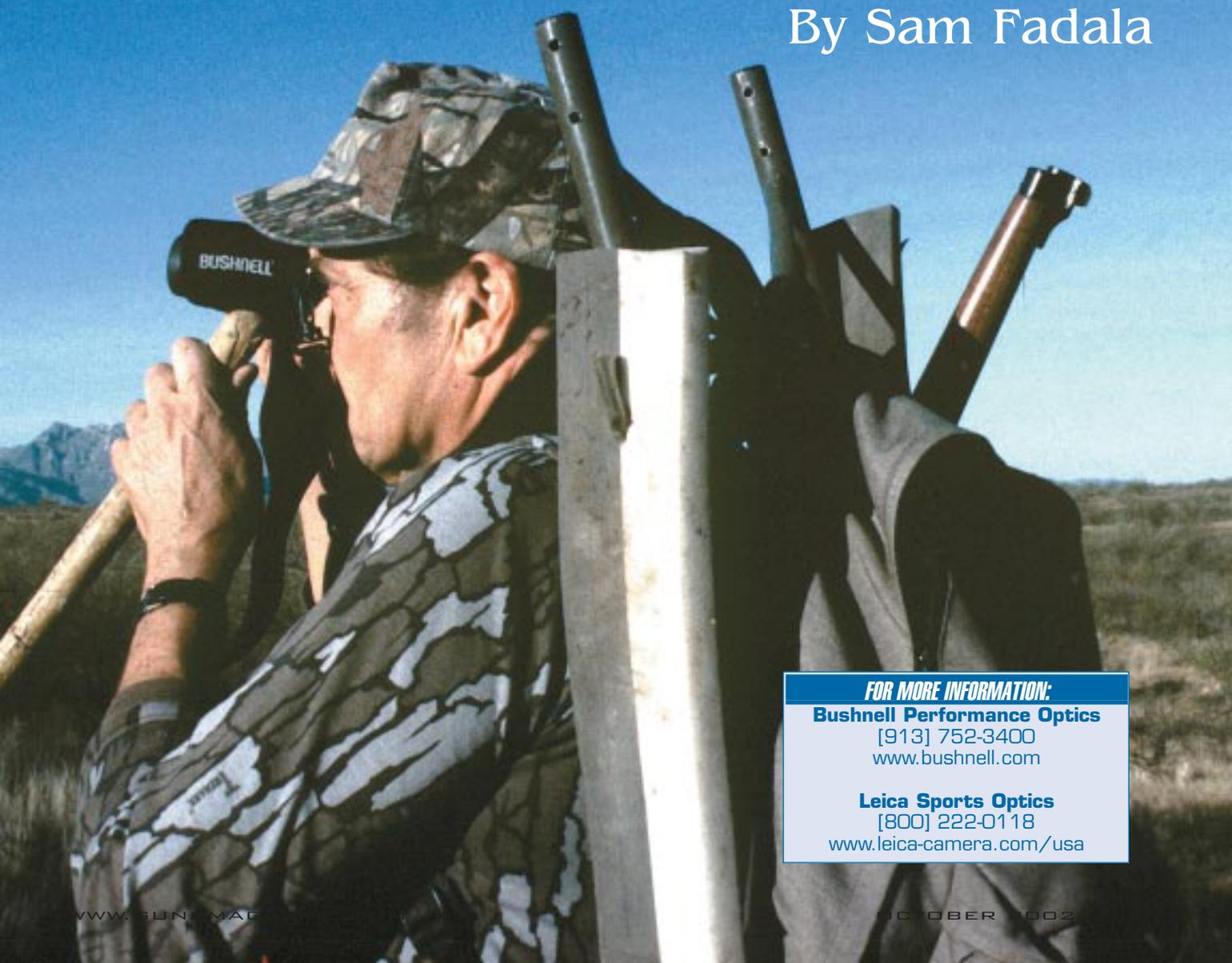
The upward angle on the boulder created an optical illusion. The fence line, straight out from us, wasn't as hard to judge, but still, no cigar. It was a humbling experience that occurred several more times on that antelope/deer hunt. Bob had a rangefinder. He could prove distance. I was only guessing.

Shortly thereafter, I had a rangefinder, too. My goal was four-fold. First to train myself in judging range by verifying my guesses, second to satisfy my curiosity, third to know how far an opportunity truly was, fourth to prove the true distance

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By Sam Fadala



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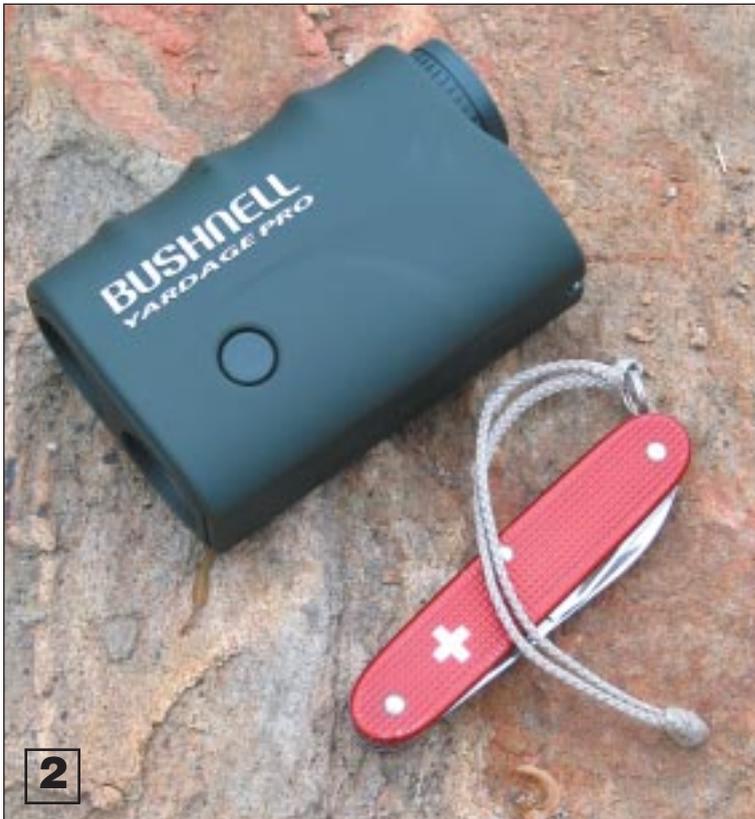
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1: We readily take them for granted, but laser rangefinders are an amazing technology. Current versions, such as the Bushnell Yardage Pro Compact 800 and Yardage Pro Scout are less expensive, lighter and yet better performers than the first generation models offered only a few years ago. **2:** Scarcely more cumbersome than a pocket knife, the Bushnell Scout fits in a shirt pocket and ranges objects out to 300 meters or more. **3:** You may be able to make only one trip this year for big-game. Carrying a lightweight, compact rangefinder just may help you make the most of your opportunities. **4:** Another great new rangefinder is the Leica LRF 1200. It's lightning-fast, rugged and priced right.



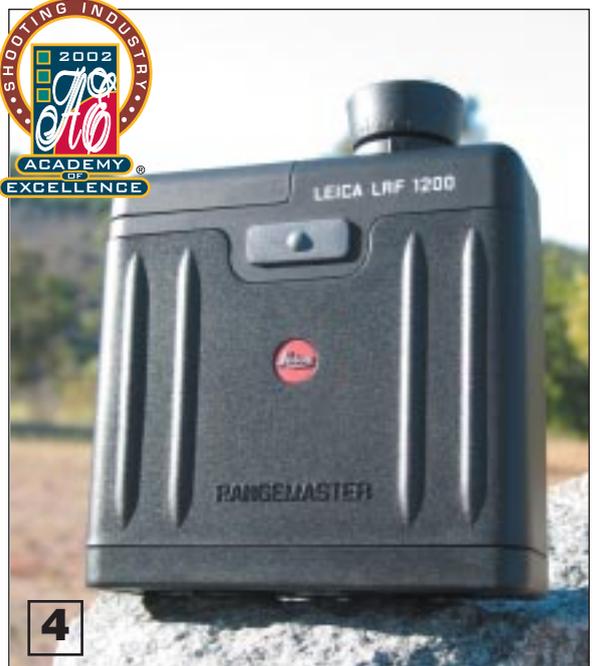
of a shot. Another benefit cropped up — rangefinding was fun. Of course, the rangefinder found its way into prairie dog country, where, for the first time, I knew just how far those long shots with my 6mm PPC truly were.

Other Uses

But improved offhand range guesstimation, varminting and just pure fun were only the beginning. I found many more uses for the rangefinder, the 600-yard model becoming an important part of my big game hunting gear. The rangefinder also aided shotgun patterning. No need here, you might say, but not so.

I set up my pattern board wherever I pleased. Instead of pacing off 40 “long ones,” the rangefinder told 40 yards exactly. Shoot, walk up, place the 30-inch cardboard disc over the greatest shot concentration, trace a circle around the pellet holes, count the number inside the circle, divide by the average number of pellets in the charge, and the actual delivered choke value was revealed.

If 50 percent of the pellets landed within the 30-inch circle, that would be Improved Cylinder performance. More important than verifying choke is knowing what shot size and wad column produce the densest patterns, not only at the standardized 40-yard distance, but also at ranges more commonly encountered in the hunting field.



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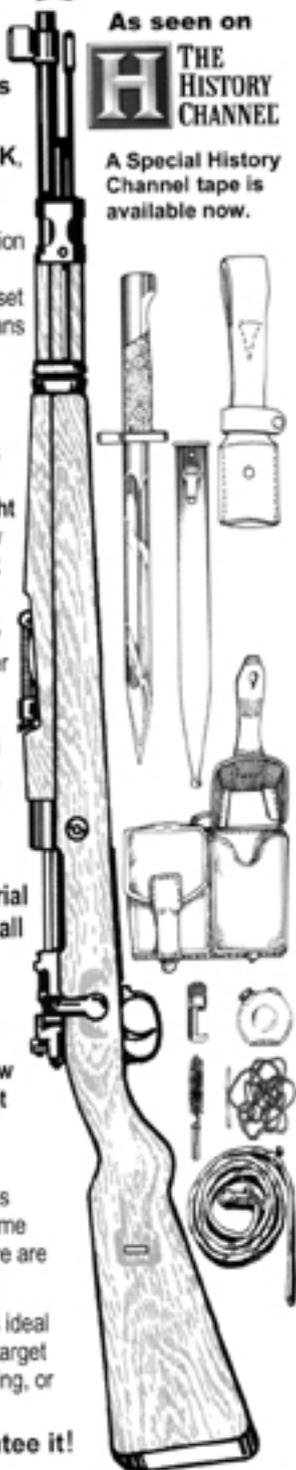
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For example, my Ruger over/under 28 gauge is mainly a quail and dove gun. Despite that, the fast handling nature of its small frame tempts me to take on larger gamebirds with the 1-ounce load. Using the rangefinder, I quickly learned how the choke tubes patterned at the various ranges normal for my 28 gauge with different loads. Armed with this knowledge, I can make the most of this lightweight.

Tree stand hunting, which has continually gained popularity over the years, is greatly benefited through the use of rangefinders. Knowing just how far various spots are in front of the stand can make the difference between a miss and a hit, more importantly a perfectly placed missile. In a Maine bear stand, with Remington Model 700 muzzleloader draped across my lap, knowing how far a shot might present itself was a confidence-builder.

Real World Results

A big boar bruin showed up, not at the bait, but on a trail. I had the exact spot doped out with the rangefinder and knew precisely how to hold for that distance. The bear proved to be number one in the Maine record book for muzzleloaders, since dropped to number four, I'm told.

From the stands I saw in Texas, where a hunter might get a truly long poke, the rangefinder would be a real boon. How far to the edge of that field? How about that bush on the other side of the creek? And that fence row way out there? Don't be surprised if you find yourself ranging everything in sight. I warned you it was fun.

Extreme range need not be the only use for this good tool. An example is the fine pronghorn buck I lucked onto last season. He was 137 yards from the muzzle of the hundred-year old Savage .30-30 I carried that day. The rangefinder verified for me that the shot was an ethical one for my vintage rifle.

Turkeys Too

Deciding when to let go on an incoming tom turkey doesn't require a whole lot of range judging ability. Not with today's extra full choke shotguns and heavy loads making it easier than ever to drop Ben's bird from a blind. Even the world of muzzleloading enjoys super scatterguns, such as the Navy Arms T&T (Full Choke version), powering 1½ ounces of shot in front of a healthy powder charge.

Or how about the Knight, another 12 gauge with plenty of snort — a full 2-ounces of shot, big powder charge, and screw-in Extra Full choke. All the same, and in spite of advanced guns, ammo and loads, rangefinders give the turkey hunter an edge as he spot-checks various nearby landmarks before calling.

"When Old Tom reaches that dead tree, he'll be in range," says our confident hunter.

continued on page 65

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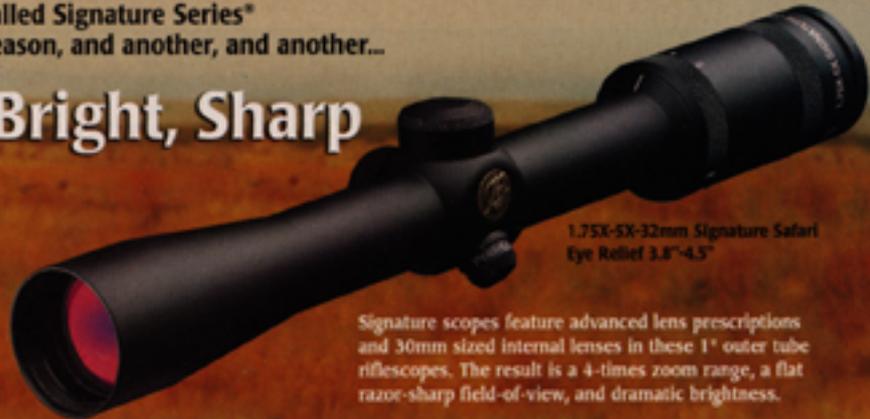
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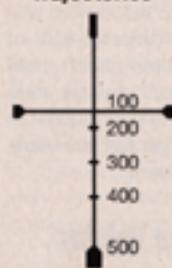
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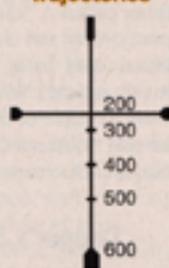
Standard Trajectories



Example Cartridges that calibrate for 100 to 500 yards.

.243	100grain
.270	150grain
7mm-08	140grain
7mm Mags	175grain
30-06	150grain
30-06	185grain
338 Mag	225grain

Magnum Trajectories



Example Cartridges that calibrate for 200 to 600 yards.

.25-06	100grain
.270	130grain
7mm Mags	140grain
7mm Shirt Mg	160grain
7mm STW	150grain
300 Mag	150grain
300 Ultra	180grain

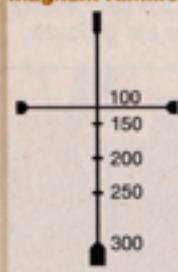


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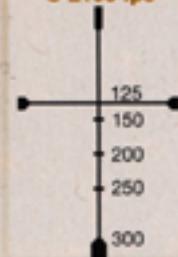
close-up at 400 yards (standard trajectory)

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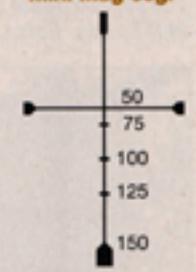
17 Hornady Magnum Rimfire



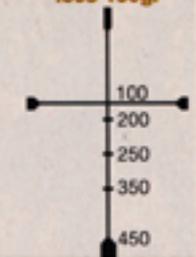
.50 Muzzleloader
250gr Sabot
@ 2100 fps



.22 Long Rifle CCI Mini Mag 36gr



3X-12X Handgun Scope
.308 150gr



Sparks no longer offers a Yaqui, but the ambidextrous Mirage is a similar design.



Short on leather, high in utility, the Yaqui slide is one of the best CCW holsters.

THE VE



The popular Yaqui slide has been offered by a host of leathersmiths. From left: Kirkpatrick, Milt Sparks, Galco, Aker and DeSantis.



The belt loop cut-out is present on most of these designs. Odds are it is seldom used.

Twenty-three years in the Marine Corps have made me a firm believer in the principle that “simple is good” — the organization has a way of helping you develop such an attitude. Over time, you sort of integrate this philosophy into everything from operational concepts to equipment, even food. I suspect this is why the Yaqui slide caught my attention back in 1981 when I was living in Southern California.

I saw my first Yaqui Slide just outside of Temecula, Calif. I was a poor youngster from Kansas who frequently attended a monthly match in the region. As you would expect for the period, the majority of shooters were using Bianchi and Davis holsters.

Another popular holster was a little plastic thing called a “snick.” While this device was pretty nifty and ahead of its time, the idea of blued steel in a plastic holster didn’t hold much appeal. What did catch my attention were a couple of the guys who I considered to be real Southern California gunfighters using Yaqui slides made by Milt Sparks.

Cooper's Signature Holster

I think I first learned of the Yaqui Slide in *Cooper on Handguns* (revised edition 1975). It was required reading in the '70s if you had aspirations to become a gunfighter. Colonel Cooper credits Eduardo Chahim from El Salvador in bringing the design to his attention.

He described the Yaqui slide as a:

“Sort of superior belt loop which carries the pistol comfortably and unostentatiously over the right hip. It is friction tight against two G’s, while still as fast as another waistband carrier.”

As you would expect, Col. Cooper recognized the practicality of such a holster.

The beauty of the slide is its simplicity. It



The versatile Yaqui accommodates many slide lengths in the same holster.



No holster works well unless teamed with a stiff, well-fitting belt. The Aker "Special Agent" reinforced belt, Yaqui holster and clip-on mag pouch make up a simple but dependable gun rig.

VERSATILE YAQUI SLIDE

BY COL. GREGORY AKERS

is small, fast, and conceals the pistol nicely. It is unobtrusive — you can leave it on your belt, remove the pistol, and it doesn't look much like a holster. The Yaqui slide is the perfect complement to those who appreciate a no-nonsense ensemble.

Generally, the Yaqui consists of two pieces of leather. One piece is folded to form a sleeve or tube through which the belt is passed, and the other is sewn to this envelope to form the loop that holds the gun. The design, simple to describe, is a bit more difficult to make. Today we see a substantial amount of variation in what is being marketed as the "Yaqui Slide."

Milt Sparks

I believe Milt Sparks was the first to market a Yaqui slide in the United States. The first such belt slide I ever owned was a Sparks given to me by a friend. I still have that slide but now it has many miles behind it. Sparks no longer offers the Yaqui, but they were widely distributed, and you may come across one at a gun shop or show.

The holster is made of thick, high quality leather. A welt formed of several layers of leather accommodates the width of the trigger guard, and makes this a stable, rugged holster. One size fits both the Browning Hi-Power and 1911 variations.

It is not a friction fit, nor does it have any tension holding devices. While it is a bit looser than other Yaqui slides, I have used one for 17 years and have not lost a gun. One possible disadvantage to this style is that the pistol is not held as close to the body as several of the other slides available, but it is considered acceptable by the IDPA. The slide will accommodate a 1¼ inch belt and it incor-

porates a rectangular cutout for a belt loop.

The purpose of this cut-out is to lock the holster in position over a trousers' belt loop. This is okay provided your belt loops are similarly located. In other words, the location of the holster will change given the location of the belt loop. While this sounds like a great idea, and I have no doubt it has utility value, I've never used it. I like being able to slide the holster along my belt and my belt loop never seems to be in the right place.

The Sparks also has the most forward cant of all the Yaquis I've seen. If you do turn up a Sparks, expect to get a thick, quality piece of leather with equally impressive workmanship.

A Texas Yaqui

Kirkpatrick Leather's version of the Yaqui Slide is a form fitted slide made to accommodate a 1½ inch belt. The slide does not have a belt loop cutout, but again I don't consider this a deficiency. Several manufacturers have one slide for all large frame SA autos; however, Kirkpatrick manufactures a slide specifically to fit the 1911 or Browning Hi-Power.

Not only do they form-fit the slide to the specific auto, the slide body is molded with a curve to match the curve of your hip — a unique feature. Kirkpatrick Leather is quality throughout — leather, stitching, and finish. A real bargain at \$36 plus shipping and handling.

Three More "Good Ones"

Several holster makers have incorporated some of the newer holster technology into their versions of the Yaqui Slide. Galco, Aker, and DeSantis each market a Yaqui; however, they all come with tension devices to enhance

retention of the pistol. Generally, they are very similar with some small variations.

The Aker uses two flathead allen screws (wrench provided) to adjust holster tension. Galco and DeSantis also use two screws but are the traditional round headed tension screws. All three models have the belt loop cutout and are made not only for the large frame SA auto but also for DA autos. The majority of my experience is with the SA auto but I have carried my SIG in Galco's Yaqui and was very pleased.

As you would expect from these three makers, the quality of workmanship is superb. The Aker appeared to be made of the heaviest leather with the Galco a close second and the DeSantis the lightest of the bunch. I'm not sure if the leather weight is an advantage or disadvantage. Regardless, all three will accommodate a 1¼ inch belt. Retail prices vary; the Galco is the most expensive selling for \$52, the DeSantis for \$35, and the Aker for \$34.

It should be pointed out that author Akers is not affiliated with Aker Leather. Editor

While all of these holsters are marketed as Yaqui slides, you can see variations in each model. Some have minor differences in cant, and in how close the pistol is held to the body, but these differences are fairly insignificant. All of them boast the same simple ruggedness and effectiveness that has made the Yaqui design popular for so many years.

The Yaqui slides I have mentioned above are the ones I am familiar with and are all approved for use in IDPA competition. Doubtless there exist additional versions produced by other makers. Don't let the absence of a description here convince you that they are not worthy of consideration.

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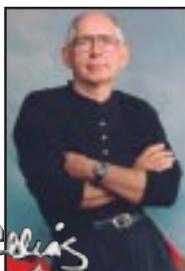


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YAQUI SLIDE

continued from page 27

Real World Experience

Carrying your favorite autopistol in a Yaqui slide is not without some concerns. When sheathed in a slide, the gun is more exposed to the elements than with other holsters. Should you slip and fall on your holster, not only are you going to have a nice bruise but you're probably going to pick up some dirt and debris, possibly scratching the finish of your pistol.

When sitting down or leaning up against hard objects, e.g., rocks, chairs, tractor seats, etc., you can expect to beat up the nose of the slide and quite possibly put nicks in the crown of the barrel. Riflemen shooting from the sitting position need give this some thought. Frankly this is more of a concern with a full-length government model than with a commander length 1911 or Browning Hi-Power.

The Yaqui Slide also works best if you have a ramp front sight. A post or an undercut front sight may snag on the bottom of the holster loop during your draw. When you do get it out, it may also have a small fragment of leather on the front sight if it is sharp enough to cut the leather. This sort of thing always seems to happen at the most inopportune moments.

In fact, it is for these reasons that Sparks no longer makes their Yaqui. In discussions with the Sparks shop, they aren't going to manufacture a Yaqui unless they can figure a way to incorporate a sight track into the design.

Do these minor weaknesses invalidate the other good features of the venerable Yaqui slide? Personally, I think not, and the continuing popularity of the design seems to indicate that others feel the same. If you can afford to give up some concealment, and protection from the elements isn't a major issue, take a look at a Yaqui slide. Even if you do not select one as your primary rig, they are great as a loaner or as a backup holster. Everyone should have one in his kit. Remember, keep it simple.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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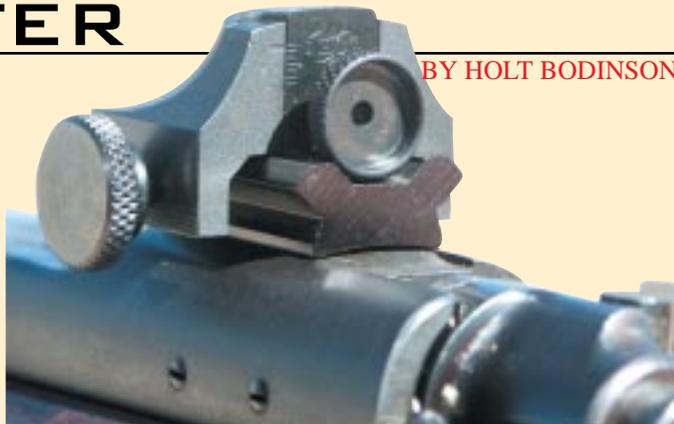
When you need this sight, you need it badly.

The almost universally adopted scope sight is still a fragile optical instrument when faced with the yearly rigors of the field. It's easily damaged. It can be put out of commission by rain or snow. Seals can leak and the interior of the scope can fog. Planning ahead, it's always nice to have a spare scope handy, but even if we have one, it's back in camp when we need it most.

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Precision machined from steel, the NECG peep sight is both lightweight and fully adjustable for elevation and windage. With the scope removed, the sight simply slips over the rear scope base and is secured with a thumbscrew. Once the sight is zeroed for your rifle and load, it returns to zero repeatedly.

The elevation slide is fully graduated, is adjusted by a precision lead screw, and locks into place by tightening the aperture disc. In the Weaver-based sight pictured here, windage is adjusted by turning two, locking, allen-head windage screws opposite the thumbscrew. The instructions give exact values for each turn or incremental turn of both the elevation and windage screws. In fact, the overall instructions rate an A+ for clarity and completeness.



The sight is provided with two aperture discs, one with an aperture of .093 inch, the other with .125 inch. For hunting purposes, the wider .125 inch aperture is the one to choose. For the Weaver based model, an additional elevation slide is supplied to accommodate different channel depths found in Weaver bases. Even allen wrenches are included in the package which retails for \$70 to \$80.

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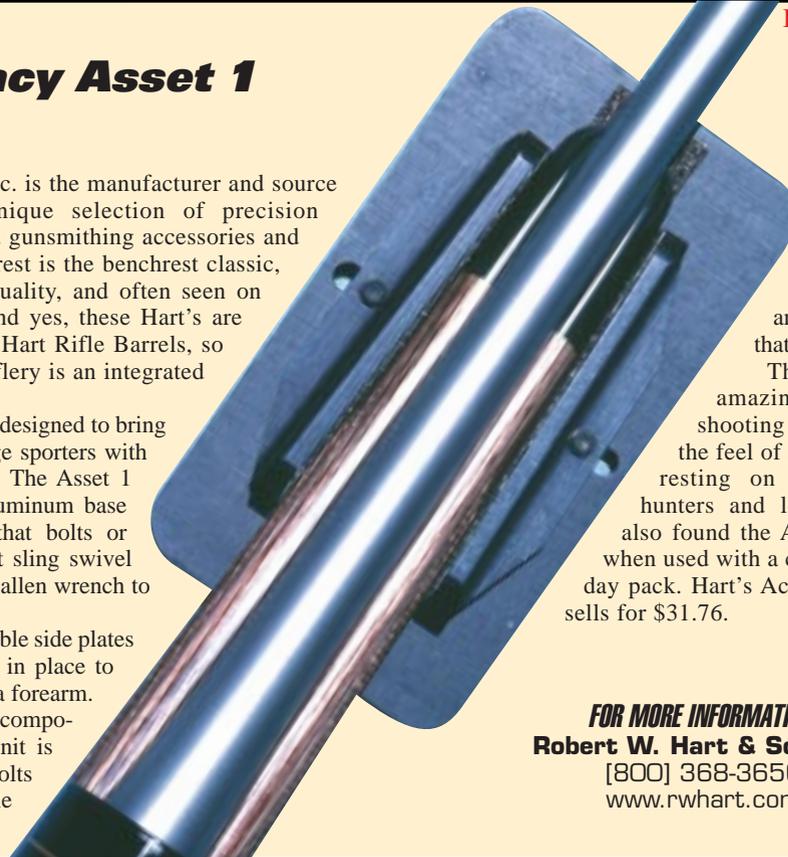
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The Hart Accuracy Asset 1 is designed to bring benchrest bag stability to average sporters with their typically narrow forearms. The Asset 1 consists of a light, anodized aluminum base plate measuring 3½x6 inches that bolts or screws lengthwise into the front sling swivel hole. (For convenience, I use an allen wrench to unscrew the front swivel base).

The base contains two adjustable side plates that are snugged up and locked in place to secure and stabilize the sides of a forearm. To protect the stock, all three components are cork lined, and the unit is supplied with an assortment of bolts and screws to fit any conceivable front sling swivel system.



Once secured to the forearm, the Asset can be used at the range in conjunction with a standard 3½ inch sand bag, or any reasonable sand bag for that matter.

The Asset 1 provides an amazingly solid and stable shooting platform, quite unlike the feel of a narrow sporter forearm resting on a front bag. Varmint hunters and long-range hunters have also found the Asset 1 invaluable afield when used with a convenient support like a day pack. Hart's Accuracy Asset 1 currently sells for \$31.76.

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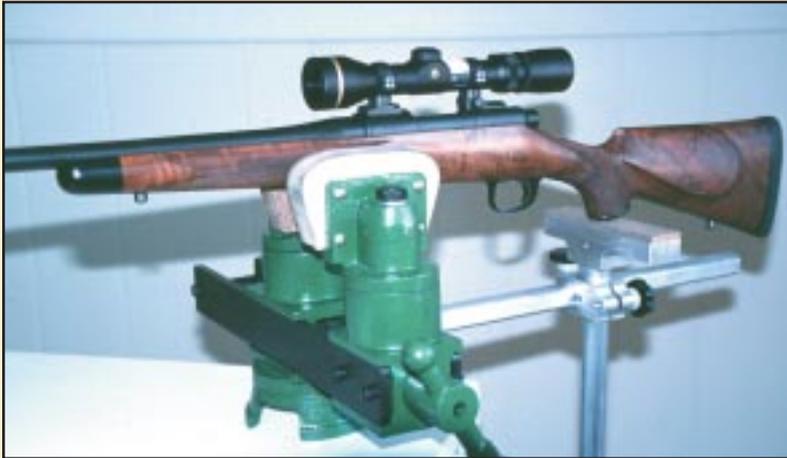
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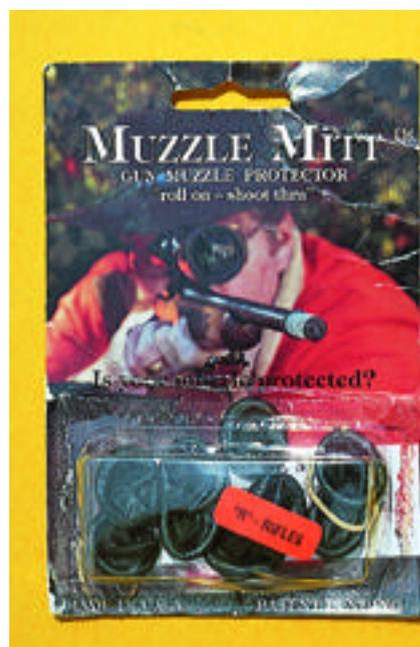


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DON'T LEAVE THESE BEHIND

BY HOLT BODINSON

Lack of the right gear at a critical moment can turn a pleasant day afield into a real problem.

“Be Prepared” is not only the timely slogan of the Boy Scouts, it’s the proper mindset for any hunter going afield. After every hunting season, I sit down, review and revise a list of hunting supplies and clothes I’ve found valuable and essential over the years.

Some years, I don’t have to make any revisions. More often than not, I do. Either because I forgot to take something with me, or a new need in the field arose, or a better product or way of doing some field task became apparent.

Making a personal list is a good habit, and once you’ve begun doing it, you’ll be pleasantly surprised how valuable and time saving it will become. I don’t know about you, but when I get up at 2 a.m. to go deer hunting, I need all the help I can get.

The following items drawn from a master list are a few essentials for the hunter that are worth their weight in gold. My choice relates primarily to big game hunting since wing shooting is usually a daily outing conducted from a warm, dry, well equipped hearth where gun, equipment and clothing problems can be readily solved.

1 An important precaution for wet weather — Muzzle Mitts or a few wraps of electrical tape. 2 Compact radios, GPS units and rangefinders are all modern technology which can enhance your hunting experience. 3 A spare scope, shell case, Leatherman tool, screw-driver and fitted bits, bipod and a Master Guide Pack from Cabela’s will solve many problems in the field.





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Extra Scope — Extra Sights

Rifles are tough. Scopes are not tough enough. Taking a spill in the rocks or spending a few days in the rain can damage the best of scopes. Some scopes seem to have a mind of their own and go completely haywire for no good reason at all. The solution? Always pack a spare scope in compatible rings that has been sighted in on your rifle before the hunt.

It needn't be an expensive scope. In fact, if I have a variable scope on my rifle, I'll probably be packing a less expensive and lighter weight fixed 4x in my pack. If your rifle is blessed with a front sight, also consider packing a little, auxiliary peep sight that slips into the rear scope base. Two good

1 A pocket-sized survival/first aid kit, plus instructional bandanna can save your life if the unexpected occurs. The pocket survival book is good camp reading. **2** Don't neglect a little basic maintenance in the hunting camp.

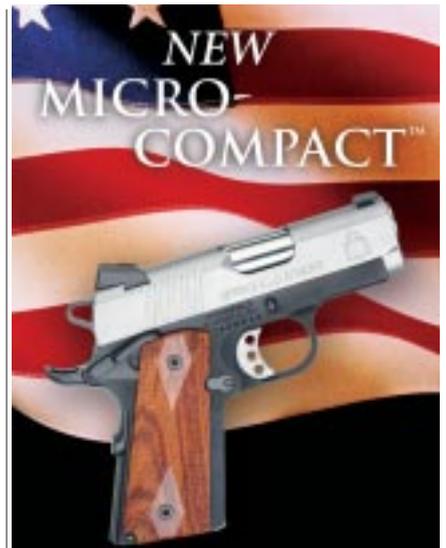
models currently available are from New England Custom Gun and Express Sight Systems that fit either Weaver bases or Ruger's integral bases.

Folding Cleaning Rod

Here's one of the neatest tools I've ever carried. It's Atsko's (the Sno-Seal people) Rapid Rod. This is a folding, aluminum cleaning rod that takes standard fittings, weighs only 2 ounces and comes in its own little pouch where you can stash some patches, jag, brush and even one of Birchwood Casey's anti-rust Sheath Take-Along's.

The Rapid Rod becomes a totally rigid rod with the turn of its handle. It can manage any bore size from .22 to 10 gauge and barrels up to 30 inches long. Carried in your pocket or pack, it earns its keep if you've ever accidentally rammed your muzzle into a snow drift or muddy earth, or experienced a stuck wad or cartridge case. And at the end of the day, it's always there to run a patch or two through a

continued on page 66



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BALLARD RIFLE'S 1885 HIGH WALL

Petty tests one of the new Ballard 1885 High Walls and finds it to be a fine shooting rifle.

BY CHARLES E. PETTY

I have a confession to make. For much of my life I looked down on older guns. Back when Winchester single-shots and lever actions were plentiful and inexpensive you couldn't have given me one. Today, much of my most enjoyable shooting involves them.

There is something really neat about launching a big 405 grain cast bullet at a steel gong 300 yards away. There is a long pause between *bang* and *clang*. But back then the .45-70 was a cartridge that had no place in my armory. It was much too old, slow and underpowered. Stupid me.

Nostalgic Reflections

Today many shooters are caught in the wave of nostalgia largely inspired by the growth of cowboy shooting. This, in turn, has inspired the industry to provide replicas that don't cost an arm and leg, but there's another segment as well. Let me introduce you to Ballard Rifle Company's *re-production*

of the Winchester High Wall. The word is pronounced with emphasis on the "re" by Steve Garbe, president of Ballard, for he points out that his High Wall is simply new production of the original gun. Parts for the new version interchange with the old (hint: if you need parts for an old High Wall call Ballard).

Late last year I was able to visit Ballard's shop in Cody, Wyoming, and watch them lovingly make authentic Ballard patent rifles and Winchester 1885s such as the one you see here. This beauty was hanging on the show room wall as a display model, but a little pleading got it to come for a visit.

John Browning's First

To appreciate this rifle we first need to study a bit of history. Any time one hears the name of John Browning the automatic association is with the 1911 pistol. Actually that design came late in the output of the prolific genius. At the

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"Ballard's shop is a great blend of old and new. Off to one side is a modern CNC machine center and the lathes and milling machines are of a newer vintage but on the work benches you'll see hand tools."

age of 24, Browning received a patent for a single-shot rifle. It was made at the Browning brothers shop in Ogden, Utah, and was chambered for the big-bore cartridges that were the staple of buffalo and other hunters in the West.

The rifle proved to be exceptionally durable and accurate and came to the attention of Winchester. They purchased the rights to Browning's patent and, in 1885, Winchester produced the first of many thousands. It was known as the Model 1885, or more often, as "the single shot."

The action can be described as a falling block in which a fairly large breech block is operated by a lever underneath. When the lever is opened the block falls out of the way to eject a spent cartridge and allow the shooter to load. When the lever is closed the block is lifted with a slight cam force that locks the breech block in place. This type of action is considerably stronger than the "Trapdoor" Springfield of the day.

It was faster to load and shoot than the Springfield and Sharps rifles because the hammer was cocked by the lever's operating cycle. So all the user had to do was pull down on the lever to eject the case, slide in a fresh cartridge, and close the lever. He was ready to shoot again. There was no need to put the hammer to half cock, operate the latch, reload, close the breech, and manually cock the hammer as was required with the Springfield.

Back to the present.

Ballard's High Wall

The rifle I am testing is a faithful re-creation of Browning's 1885. The sample rifle's receiver is beautifully case hardened. A version with blued receiver is also available, but there is a difference beyond the finish. Most blue steel firearms receivers are made from 4140 steel alloy. For best results on receivers destined to be color case hardened, Ballard uses 8620 steel.

While the High Wall is extremely strong in either material, Ballard will chamber rifles with the case hardened receiver only for period black powder cartridges. Further, they recommend that the case hardened receivers be shot only with black powder equivalent loads. As you probably know, most loading manuals have three different levels of .45-70 data. The first is suitable for the older rifles such as the Trapdoor Springfield and original Winchesters. Those are the only ones used here.

Ballard's shop is a great blend of old and new. Off to one side is a modern CNC machine center, and the lathes and milling machines are of a newer vintage. But on the work benches you'll see hand tools. In the wood shop there is no duplicating-machine. The desired outline is marked on the stock blank and gifted hands take it from there. Virtually everything on the sample rifle was manufactured by Ballard.

The exception is the No. 4 octagonal barrel which came from Badger Barrels — but which was profiled and finished by Ballard's talented craftsmen. The customer can have some choices here too for both Krieger and Douglas barrels are available. I'm sure some screws are store bought, but the stock, action and sights are not. Some parts are roughed out on a CNC machine center, but finished and fitted by hand. They do their own bluing and spectacular *real* case hardening.

Of Alchemy And Steel

There are a number of replica firearms on the market that sport "color case hardening." In some cases, that is exactly what you receive, but often these mottled finishes are produced artificially. Genuine pack case hardening is more art than science. The job of surface preparation and hardening in the Ballard shop falls to Keith Kilby. You may have heard this gentleman's name before, as he is also one of America's most respected custom knifemakers.

Kilby is passionate about his work, and has spent many hours refining the process to ensure both a beautiful coloration and good depth of hardening on the finished com-





1 John Browning's proven design is strong, simple and easy to use. **2** The excellent mid-range vernier sight is made on site by Ballard. **3** Great wood-to-metal fit, crisp checkering and genuine pack case hardening make the Ballard High Wall one of the most attractive rifles Petty has reviewed. **4** Color case hardened and checkered, the buttplate is a perfect match to the style of the Ballard. **5** The forend is correctly proportioned, very nicely checkered and features a schnabel style tip.

ponents. In simplest terms, parts to be color cased must first be meticulously prepared, and Kilby hand polishes them until the proper finish is achieved. The prepared components are then carefully arrayed in a mixture consisting of charred leather, bone meal and other ingredients as they are packed into an iron container.

The sealed container is brought to the critical temperature in a furnace and allowed to "heat soak" for a time. This infuses additional carbon into the surface of the steel components. When all is in readiness, the container is taken

from the furnace, hurriedly opened, and the contents plunged into the quenching tank. The exact formulation, temperature and degree of aeration of the quenching water is another of the critical secrets that will make or break the color case hardening process.

Done correctly, the result is a steel component with a hard skin or "case" perhaps .001 to .002 thousandths of an inch deep, along with a beautiful mottled coloration of blues, grays and reds. Suffice to say, Ballard does it correctly, and the result is beautiful to behold.

A Winning Team

Another part of the Ballard team who's influence is seen in the High Wall is Ron Long. Long, formerly of Denver, Colo., is well known and respected by those who participate in the demanding discipline of Black Powder Cartridge Rifle silhouette competition. Long-built rifles often dominate the winners circle in this sport, and he has brought his hard won knowledge and experience to the new 1885s being produced by Ballard.





Superb Fit And Finish

As you will see from the photos, this is a truly gorgeous rifle. And what you see here is representative of a fairly basic rifle with a few options. The walnut of stock and forend match nicely. The grade of wood here is standard, but you can have pretty well whatever you want — and can pay for — in walnut. Ballard's inventory of blanks runs all the way up to some truly spectacular exhibition-grade wood. Checkering is hand cut with no over-runs and wood to metal fit is what you'd expect for a custom rifle: just right.

I've raved about the case hardening, but the blueing isn't bad either. It takes a special talent to hand-polish any gun, but the octagonal barrel with all those flats and edges gives an extra opportunity to mess up. A critical eye along the flats and corners sees that the flats are flat and corners sharp — just as they should be. The color of the blue, which is done in house, is deep and lustrous. The muzzle is finished in the manner of European custom guns and is polished brightly and left "in the white," which contrasts pleasingly with the blue and case color.

At The Loading Bench And The Range

When I first began to work with the Ballard I expected it to be a fun nostalgia trip. And so it was. But along the way it turned into an interesting handloading project and a pointed reminder of the whims of rifles and components. Let me explain.

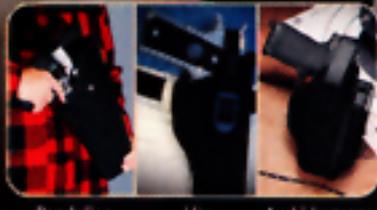
I began loading with two cast bullets (300 and 405 grain) and jacketed bullets of 300, 350 and 405 grains weight. Not too long ago the .45-70 was viewed as something of a problem child for reloaders, but there is now lots of data using powders such as 4895, Reloder 7 and 12, AA 2015 BR and H-322. Loading data was used from all the major manuals.

I shot four factory loads and got five shot groups at 100 yards that ranged between 1.8 and 2.2 inches, and then began shooting a series of handloads with both cast and jacketed bullets. A wide assortment of handloads did about the same. Then I happened across a load in Hodgdon's manual using Varget powder and a 300 grain JHP.



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I've been ultra cautious with powders we could call "non-traditional" in the .45-70 so I loaded only a few rounds with 50.0 grains of Varget and the Remington 300 grain JHP. This is a little below the starting load but gave 1,433 fps from the 32 inch barrel. Groups with some other loads that day gave results typical of earlier session. But when I shot the Varget loads I thought something was wrong.

Through the scope I could see but a single nice round one-hole group that later measured .77 inch. This amounts to a quantum leap in accuracy so, as you might expect, Varget became an object of my affection when it came time to load more ammo for the High Wall. To my delight, accuracy was consistent with groups always under an inch.

Shooting this rifle is almost *too much* fun. With a weight of 10.7 pounds, recoil is of little concern and with the exceptional vernier rear and aperture front sights you can really be very precise in accuracy. These sights are made by Ballard and are an extra cost option but completely worthwhile for the type of shooting I was doing.

Now For The Fun Part

As I learned more about the rifle the next step was to stretch out the range. My home range has an 18 inch diameter steel gong set 300 yards downrange. It took considerable cranking on the elevation adjustment but the vernier scale on the sight made it easy to keep track of the changes, which were substantial.

By spotting hits in the dirt it didn't take too long to zero in on the gong and hit it with satisfying regularity. And there is another fun part: the load that seems to shoot best leaves the muzzle at about 1,500 fps. So it takes about two seconds for the bullet to get there, where it arrives at around 1,000 fps and yet still delivers quite a whack. Then a little more time passes until the sound gets back. It's almost spooky for it takes so long I often thought I'd missed... then the *clang* would show up a moment later. Great fun!

As you might expect these hand built rifles aren't cheap. Prices for Ballard's High Wall start at \$2,050 and go up from there depending on options such as wood, checkering and sights. These really are very much custom rifles with many options but there is one thing it is hard to put a price on... that is the sheer fun of shooting a real piece of his-

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The rifle is heavy in my hands. Its finish is spotless — no wear, no corrosion. Beautiful, dense and dark, the stock is perfect, sans dents or damage. I've just returned from the range, and I know the rifle shoots as good as it looks. A lot of M1s have passed through my hands, but none that looked as good as this.

It should look good. This Garand is not a beat up, reworked, abused veteran, but rather brand new production from Springfield Armory. I'm anxious to describe it to you in detail, but you can't speak of John C. Garand's masterpiece without understanding a little history.

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Eventually Garand's design won out but it was originally scheduled

for adoption in a novel cartridge designed by Pedersen, the .276 Pedersen.

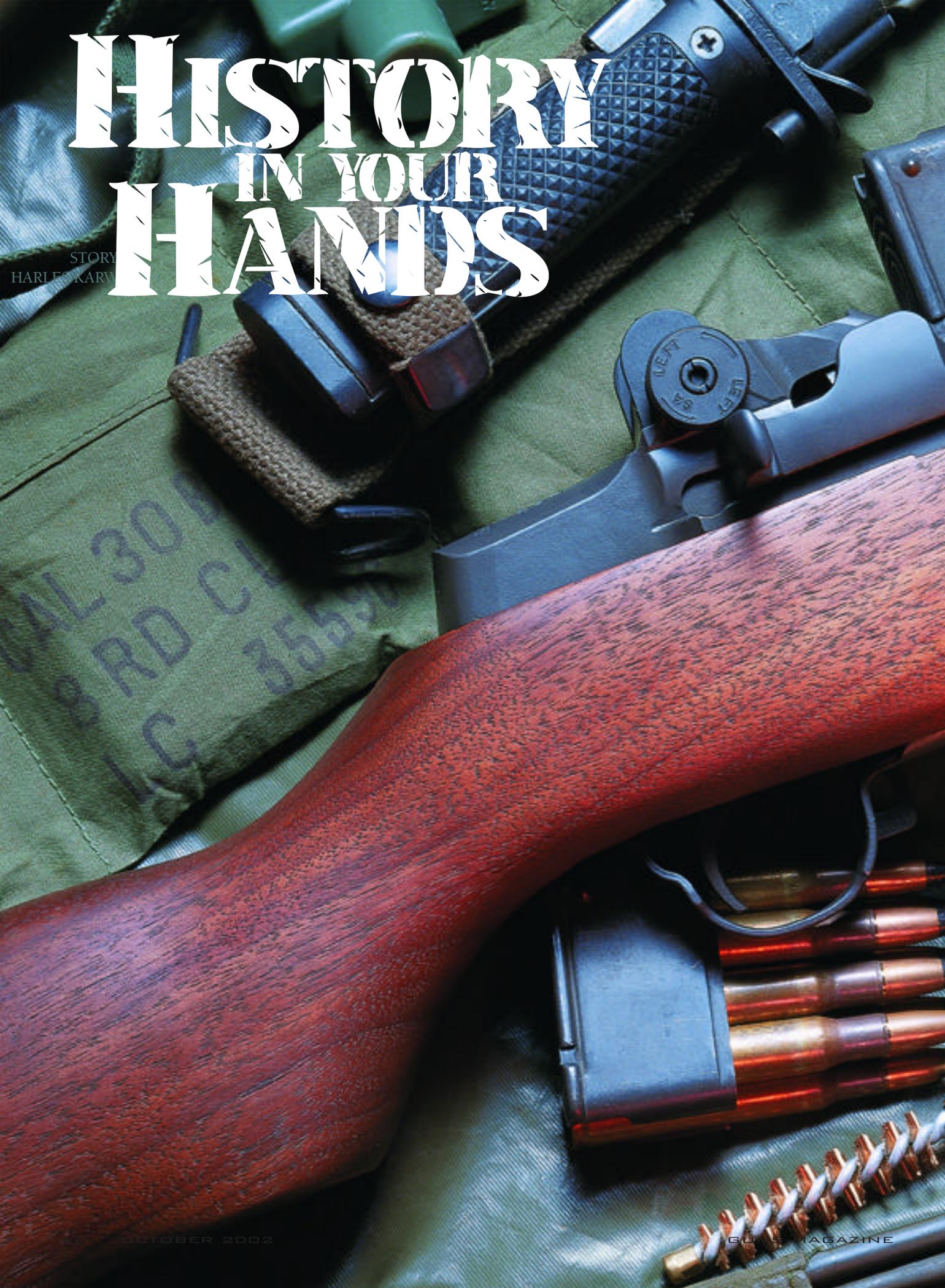
I have handled a .276 Garand prototype in the West Point Museum collection and it is an intriguing rifle. It is much slimmer and trimmer than the .30-'06 M1, about a pound and a half lighter, and generally handier.

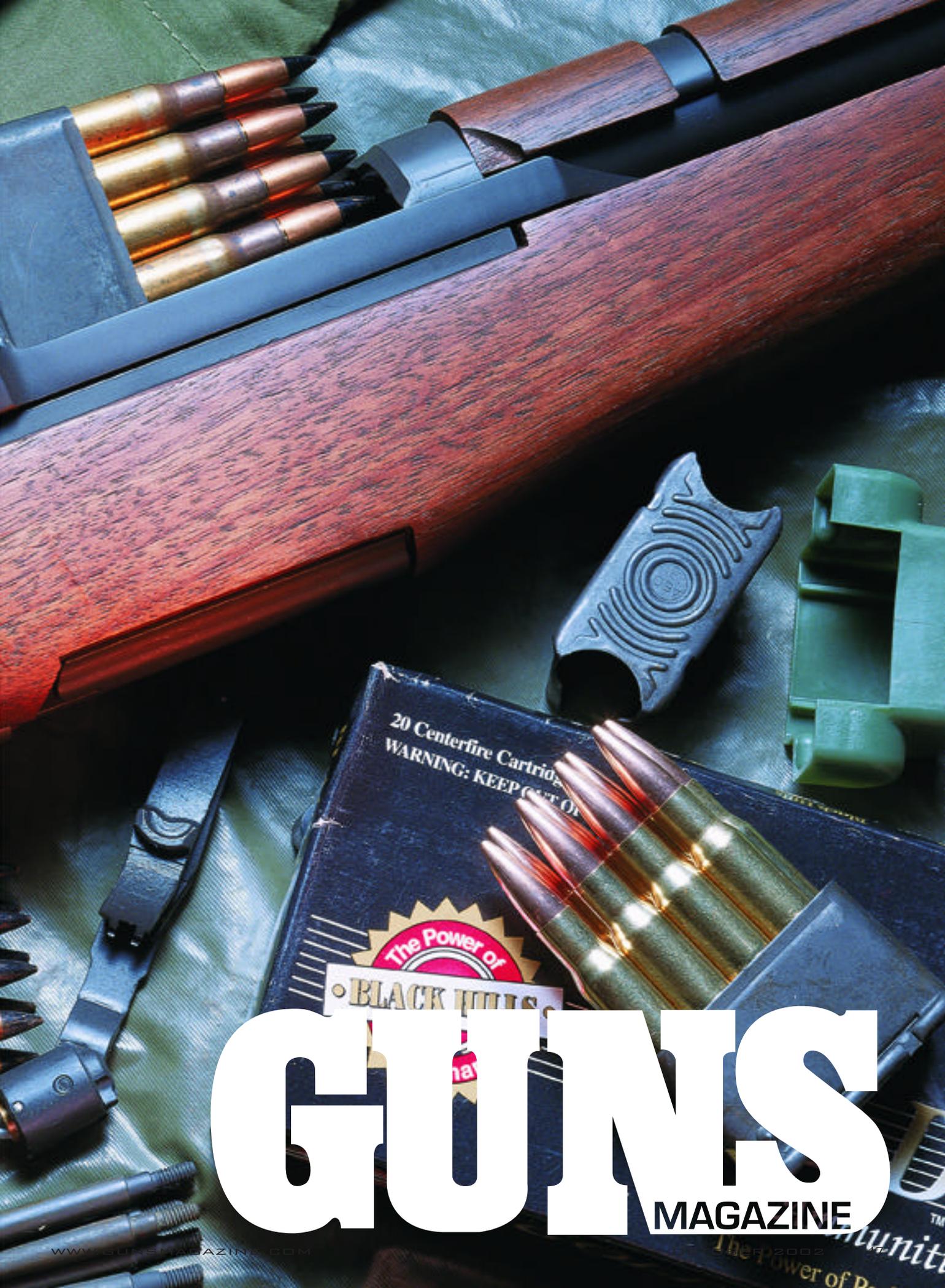
Recoil must have been quite mild, and its magazine capacity was 10 rounds instead of eight. While the .276 Pedersen was less powerful than the .30-'06, it was more than adequately powerful for service rifle use — typically launching a 125 grain 7mm bullet at 2,550 fps.



HISTORY IN YOUR HANDS

STORY
HARLES KARW





GUNS

MAGAZINE

In 1932 the recommendation for adoption and production of the .276 Garand rifle was approved all the way up to Army Chief of Staff, General Douglas MacArthur. Unfortunately, MacArthur unilaterally disapproved it. He wanted the rifle but in .30-'06.

This was done and the .30-'06 Garand eventually passed its tests just as well as did the .276 version. In January of 1936 it was officially adopted as the "U. S. Rifle, Cal. .30 M1."

MacArthur's decision caused a four year delay in getting the Garand adopted and in production. Our military forces might have been far better prepared when the war eventually broke out if that delay had not taken place.

Desperate Need

When World War II broke out, only about 40,000 .30 M1 Garand rifles had been produced, and few were in the hands of troops. The new rifle was particularly scarce overseas, but it soon took over as the primary combat rifle of the entire U. S. Army.

The M1 went through a series of changes and refinements as the war progressed and evolved into a truly excep-

tional combat rifle. There is no doubt the M1 Garand was one of the crowning achievements in the rather checkered history of the U. S. Army Ordnance system.

While I believe the .276 Garand would have been even better, the .30 M1 Garand was unquestionably the best combat rifle of its day. It was also the first semiautomatic rifle to be adopted as the standard, general issue rifle of any nation in the world. Combat use proved the M1 Garand was actually more rugged and reliable than the bolt action M1903 Springfield it replaced.

Eye-Witness To History

To quote from the book *Shots Fired In Anger*, authored by LTC John George, who served as an Army officer at Guadalcanal and in Burma as one of Merrill's Marauders:

"In the matter of jams and malfunctioning it seemed very doubtful if the Springfield proved as reliable as the Garand, round for round. The old faults of the M-1903 — a frequently broken firing pin assembly and a delicate front and rear sight — seemed to account for as many stoppages in combat as feeding difficulties did with the M1... And most of the stoppages encountered in M1 firing are not 'stop-





pages' at all. The greater part of them merely nullify the semi-auto feature, leaving the soldier yet armed with a weapon that can be hand operated almost as fast as a Springfield in perfect condition."

Superior Fighting Rifle

In addition, the M1 Garand has, in my considerable experience with both rifles, a much higher level of practical accuracy than the M1903 Springfield. Please note that I said "practical accuracy." In combat the only thing that counts is hits. The M1 is far easier to get hits with in the field than the old M1903. There is simply no comparison.

The primary reason is that the M1 has perhaps the best combat sights ever put on a military rifle, while the M1903 just might have the worst. Also the Garand sight is extremely fast to use while the M1903 sight is extremely poor in this regard, particularly in dim light.

In combat this difference in speed is significant because of the fleeting nature of the typical combat target. Which is why I say the M1 Garand has better practical accuracy than the rifle it replaced. Actually it's not even close — the M1 is that much better.

As good as it was, the M1 had its drawbacks. The two most prominent were its substantial weight (officially 9.5 pounds but actually well over 10 pounds fully loaded with sling and cleaning kit in the butt trap) and its eight round en-bloc clip feed system.

There is no question that the M1 was heavier than it should have been, but as was pointed out earlier this was largely a function of its chambering. If it had been made in .276 Pedersen it would have weighed considerably less.

That Cussed Clip

The en-bloc clip feed system of the M1 probably led to more criticism than any other characteristic. It was little more than a slight variation of the Mannlicher clip system which was obsolescent by the late 1890s. As applied to the M1, the rifle must have its ammunition in an eight round clip or it will not feed and you have little more than a self-ejecting single shot rifle.

This sounds like a serious deficiency, but it never turned out to be so in World War II or Korea. Virtually all of the ammunition intended for rifle use was sent to the troops already

continued on page 72





Elyse and Madison, an integral part of the test team, offered the 12-year-old's perspective: "Cool." It was unanimous.





FOUR-PLAY E-Z-GO'S VERSATILE "LITTLE TRUCK"

These newest ATVs offer a civilized way to explore the great outdoors.

BY ROY HUNTINGTON

Editor, American Handgunner Magazine

We all grew up seeing those ads for that six-wheeled "go anywhere" vehicle in the classified sections of outdoor magazines. It usually showed two fellows with big smiles on their faces as they gamely forged a stream or climbed a steep ravine. And, if you had any blood in your body at all, you lusted for one. Terribly. But it seems they were always just "out of reach," and we had too many reasons not to go for it.

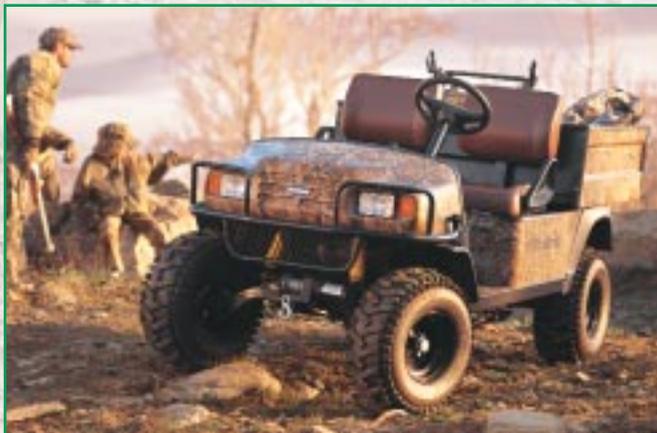
Today's hunters, hikers and outdoors-types, however, go for it with a vengeance. With the introduction of Honda's three-wheelers, suddenly almost anyone could afford personal, off-road wheels. Hunters soon realized the value of these handy little gizmos. For a couple of thousand dollars they had a way of getting "way back there" where the big bucks and virgin trout streams hid, without beating themselves half to death in the process.

Besides, who wants to hike out with 150 pounds of elk on their back if they don't have to? Hold your cries of "unsportsmanlike" and "when I was your age we didn't do such things" and listen up. Today's hunter often has limited time to travel to his hunting destination, enjoy his hunt, and get back in time to re-start the work-week grind. Any advantage they can use to help give them more on-scene hunting time is considered money — and time — well spent.

Novelties?

In the early days, even the three-wheelers were considered unusual in the field. Surplus Jeeps, standard four-wheel drive vehicles, and boot-power were the norm. As the public grew to accept the sight of the little helpers, manufacturers began to cater to the hunter with models specifically designed to meet their needs. Today, you only need to look at a Cabelas catalog (www.cabelas.com) to see just how far the market has come. Their multiple page listing of every goodie you can think of to bolt on, weld-to and snap onto a modern ATV (all terrain vehicle) can cause anyone who owns an ATV to get sweaty palms and heart palpitations.

The introduction of the four wheel ATV cycle really opened the door. Now, you can buy custom "cabs" that snap around your cycle.



With the Advantage® Classic Camo option, the Workhorse looks right at home in the hunting field.

1**2****3**

plus enough rifle and bow cases, coolers, saddle bags, carry racks, GPS holders, water and gas goodies, loading ramps, winches and even dog carriers to please anyone's worse case of the "gotta'-have-its." From heated handlebar covers to fluffy sheepskin seats, today's ATV riders' wishes have become manufacturers' commands.

But still, an ATV cycle is limited. Usually two-up is the maximum passenger payload and you are still, well, riding with an engine between your 'nether regions and subject to all the trials and tribulations of slapping branches and slinging mud. There must be a more civilized way to conduct business when afield these days — and there is. The newest generation of four-wheeled ATV machines.

1 Loading is easy with a pair of aluminum ramps. The Workhorse fits in the bed of a full-sized pick-up truck. In some models the tailgate may have to be down. **2** The hydraulic bed lift offered a high level of convenience when the Workhorse was put to use as a landscaping truck. From loading firewood to hauling game, the dump bed is a first-rate idea. **3** The Workhorse's compact 350 cc air cooled twin offers 11 horsepower, delivered when you need it. It ran cool in the heat of the California desert.

Here and Now

These new machines allow a rider to suddenly become a passenger. With bench or bucket seats, windshield and roof, think of them as golf carts on steroids. Which, as a matter of fact, many of them are. For instance, the E-Z-GO Workhorse ST Sport is manufactured by E-Z-GO, long famous for its gasoline and electrically powered golf carts. All of which can be a good thing. Few vehicles are subjected to the daily grind of starting, stopping and general abuse and neglect that a golf cart endures. Take that experience and technology and add a healthy dose of heavy-duty welds, shocks and other goodies and presto — off-roading in comfort and style becomes a reality.

Say good-bye to cramped leg muscles and mud in 'yer eye and hello to sitting back with lots of room to carry equipment and game. Factor in the multiple uses possible with a vehicle like the Workhorse (ranch, home and more) and you have a lot of versatility for your buck. Big motors, solid suspensions and lists of features and options you might not have thought possible, are all, indeed possible, when the platform is a bit bigger. The ATV cycle still has a place and is a real winner. But in many cases — especially for a, shall we say, "mature" hunter — the comfort of a full-sized Workhorse-type ATV just plain makes good sense.

Torqued-Off

The bigger vehicles require beefier engines, or at least more sophisticated engineering, in some cases. Low end torque rules the game and high-end speed is often sacrificed for a low-g geared tranny. Surprisingly, many of the bigger machines are not four wheel drive, but after testing the Workhorse we rapidly discovered four wheel drive isn't always necessary for the kinds of jobs these vehicles are capable of handling.

While not really intended for heavy-duty off-roading (the gooey mud and deep snow kind), the Workhorse handled any situation the riders were inclined to try. Discretion is always the watchword when off-road, and by sticking to "sorta" visible dirt roads" the Workhorse keeps you out of trouble. Top speed measures out around 12 to 15 mph, which is plenty fast to keep the bugs in your teeth and the branches whipping past the windshield. Besides — what's your hurry?

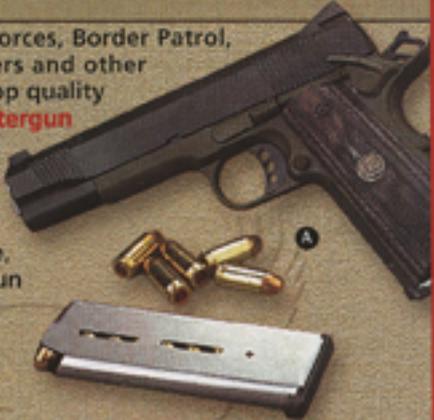
Gas mileage is measured in hours per gallon and on one test we ran the Workhorse (with it's 350 cc engine) virtually all day, with zillions of runs up and down dirt roads and the "let me drive it" crowd running amuck. By the end of the day the six gallon tank registered slightly less than half full (or half empty?) so we got, 'er, 'um, about three or four hours to the gallon. Give or take some. Suffice to say they are stingy in the gasoline arena. Besides, with all that room, an extra gas can is no problem.

continued on page 70

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CUSTOM MARLIN LEVERGUNS

Big-Bores For Bear, Boar And Buffalo.

BY JOHN TAFFIN



MARLIN 1894 .44 MAGNUM/DRC CUSTOM			
Load	MV	TKO	Group
Winchester 260 gr. Partition Gold	1,595	25.5	1 1/8"
Cor-Bon 260 gr. Bonded Core	1,854	29.6	3/8"
Buffalo Bore 270 gr. JFN	1,707	28.3	1"
Speer 270 gr. Gold Dot	1,526	25.3	1 1/8"
Cor-Bon 280 gr. Bonded Core	1,575	27.1	7/8"
Buffalo Bore 300 gr. JSP	1,596	29.4	1 1/8"
Cor-Bon 300 gr. JSP	1,543	28.4	1 1/4"
Federal 300 gr. Hard Cast	1,460	26.9	3/4"
Buffalo Bore 305 gr. LBT	1,631	30.6	1 3/8"
Garrett 310 gr. Keith	1,511	28.8	1 1/8"
Black Hills 320 gr. Hard Cast	1,404	27.6	1"
Cor-Bon 320 gr. Hard Cast	1,479	29.1	1 3/8"
Garrett 330 gr. HammerHead	1,599	32.4	1 3/8"
Hornady 265 gr./20.0 gr. AA#9	1,596	26.0	1 1/4"
Speer 270 gr. GD/17.0 gr. AA#9	1,365	22.6	1 3/8"
Hornady 300 gr. XTP/17.5 gr. AA#9	1,377	25.4	1 1/2"
Nosler 300 gr. JHP/17.0 gr. AA#9	1,345	24.8	3/4"
Sierra 300 gr. JFP/17.5 gr. AA#9	1,313	24.2	1"
Speer 300 gr. JFP/18.5 gr. AA#9	1,407	25.9	3/4"
CPBC 320 gr. LBT/18.0 gr. AA#9	1,452	28.5	3/4"

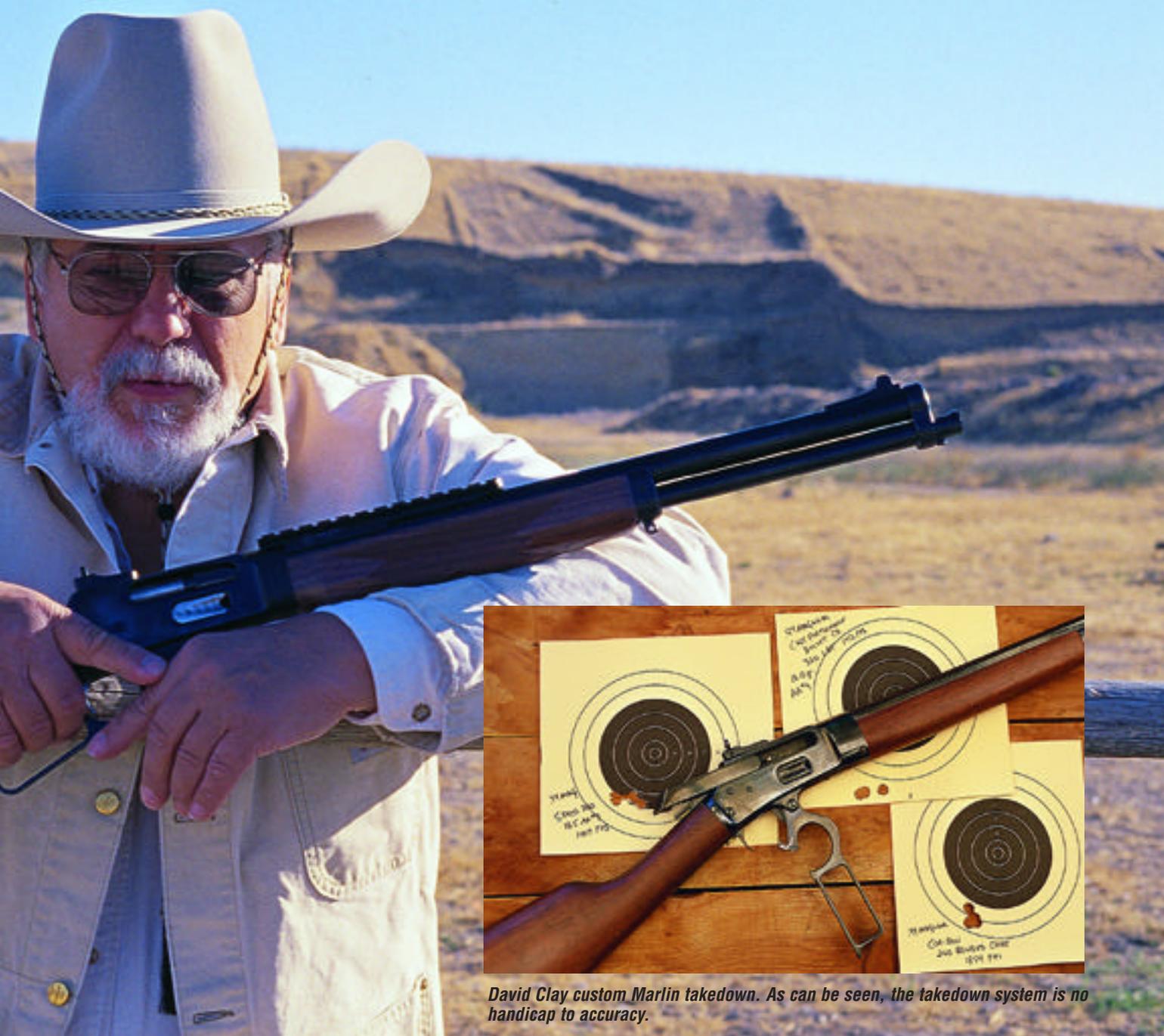
1895 MARLIN.475 GNR/REEDER CUSTOM			
Load	MV	TKO	Group
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/50.0 gr. H322	1,779	45.3	1 1/2"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/52.0 gr. H322	1,810	46.1	2 1/4"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/54.0 gr. H322	1,914	48.7	1 5/8"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/56.0 gr. H322	1,985	50.5	1 3/4"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/46.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,620	41.2	1 3/8"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/48.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,647	41.9	1 5/8"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/50.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,703	43.3	1 1/2"
CPBC 375 gr. LBT-GC/52.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,844	46.9	1 1/2"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/46.0 gr. H322	1,641	47.3	1 3/8"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/48.0 gr. H322	1,695	48.9	2 1/2"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/50.0 gr. H322	1,781	51.4	2 1/2"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/52.0 gr. H322	1,856	53.5	2 3/4"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/44.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,562	45.0	2"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/46.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,586	45.7	2 1/8"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/48.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,677	48.4	2 1/2"
CPBC 425 gr. LBT-GC/50.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,833	52.9	2"
Hornady 400 gr. XTP/50.0 gr. H322	1,790	48.6	1 3/4"
Speer 400 gr. FN/50.0 gr. H322	1,773	48.1	1 1/4"

If there is anything that even comes close to rivaling a big-bore sixgun when hunting deer, bear, or wild hogs in heavy brush or timber, it is a short-barreled lever-action chambered in a big-bore sixgun or rifle cartridge.

When the .44 Magnum arrived in the mid-1950s it changed the face of sixgunning forever, giving handgun hunters what had to that time been unheard of power in a revolver. It also soon found its way into lever action carbines. Just as they had done earlier with the .357 Magnum, custom gunsmiths began to convert old Model 1892 Winchesters to .44 Magnum.

It did not take firearms manufacturers very long to discover there was a real market in chambering their leverguns for the .44 Magnum, and by the mid-1960s both the Winchester Model 1894 and the Marlin Model 336 were available in the big .44. I purchased one of the very early Marlin .44 Magnums more than 30 years ago, and it long ago became one of those never sell or trade away rifles.

It would be very hard to find a more suitable round and rifle than a .44 Magnum levergun for close range deer, black bear, and feral pig hunting. Winchester, Marlin, Browning and Rossi have all produced lever action .44 Magnums. The



David Clay custom Marlin takedown. As can be seen, the takedown system is no handicap to accuracy.

Brownings are long out of production, however, the .44 Magnum is alive and well in Rossi, Winchester, and especially Marlin leverguns.

Marlin's First .44 Magnum

The first Marlin .44 Magnum was chambered in their long Model 336 action. The short action Marlin 1894, which had been chambered in the .25-20, .32-20, .38-40, and .44-40, was dropped from production in 1935. However, Marlin could see the market for a return to a short action levergun and a modernized version of the 1894 was introduced in 1969.

Since that time, in addition to .44 Magnum, it has been chambered in the .357 Magnum, .41 Magnum, .45 Colt, .44-40, .32-20, .25-20, and .218 Bee. Hopefully, someday soon we'll see the other hyphenated cartridge added to the 1894 line up, that being the .38-40.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, sixguns and leverguns chambered for the same cartridge were a popular combination. This idea is still popular today, and the most commonly encountered combinations are the Magnums .357 and .44 in both sixgun and long-gun form. Depending upon which area of the country one lives in, one or both of these combinations makes a great deal of sense.

My old Marlin 336 .44 Magnum has spent a lot of time as a companion to either a Ruger .44 Blackhawk or a S&W .44 Magnum. It is simply one of the handiest leverguns ever offered.

Having said all that, one might conclude that it could not be improved. That would be wrong as every firearm can be improved to some extent.

Making A Good Gun Better

My original Marlin 336 .44 Magnum has gone through two improvements. The first year I used it in a wet Idaho winter, the stock finish, or what little there was, died. I spent several weeks refinishing that stock with about a dozen coats of Tru-Oil followed by rubbing with 0000 steel wool.

About ten years ago, I made a further improvement by having the butt stock and forearm slimmed down to make an even handier levergun. I could have made a good case for having arrived at levergun perfection. However, any good guncrank knows the path to enjoyment is trying to get closer and closer to that all elusive perfection.

For the past several months I have been shooting and enjoying a Marlin .44 Magnum levergun that dramatically reduces the space between perfection and my Model 336. This little big-bore levergun



was built for Ashley Emerson who designed the Express Sight Systems Ghost Ring sight.

Emerson is a kindred spirit. He appreciates sixguns and easy handling leverguns both chambered for big-bore cartridges. We also share a favorite hunting spot, that being the Penn Baggett Ranch outside of Ozona, Texas.

David Clay Custom Takedown

Emerson's custom .44 Magnum was built by DRC Custom Guns. In addition to the ghost ring sights, both forearm and butt stock have been slimmed down and refinished. A Pachmayr Decelerator recoil pad has been carefully fitted, the octagonal barrel has been slimmed to reduce weight, all metal parts have been richly refinished in a deep dark blue and all sharp edges gently rounded for carrying and handling comfort.

The entire package turns out to be just about the slickest little levergun one can imagine. However, there is more. To make it easy to transport, this little Marlin has been transformed into a take-down model. This makes transportation very easy as it can be packed into a small container that does not shout, "Rifle Enclosed."

The take-down feature is easily operated. With the action opened, two spring loaded detents at the front end of the magazine tube are pressed simultaneously which allows the tube to move far enough forward so that the barrel, magazine tube, and forearm may be unscrewed as a unit. When they are replaced in reverse order, a transverse catch behind the back end of the forearm locks into place.

DRC specializes in takedown leverguns that feature a locking mechanism to allow cartridges to remain in the magazine tube during the take-down process and also an adjustment between action and barrel assemblies to correct any possible future wear. From what I have seen of this levergun and other work by DRC, I can recommend them highly.

Small frame custom 1894 from David Clay is compared to a large frame 1895 Marlin from Cosby's Custom.



Gary Reeder's custom .475 GNR is as potent as it is handsome.

Ideal Sights For Close-Range Hunting

Ghost Ring sights are designed for hunting up close, and I personally cannot punch tiny little groups in paper targets at long range with them. What these sights lack in long range precision (for my eyes), they more than make up for in speed.

The rear Ghost Ring sight consists of a very large diameter aperture with thin rim which mounts to the existing holes on the Marlin's receiver. It is a tidy and compact sight which features simple but good windage and elevation adjustments. The front sight can be a bead, or as on this rifle, a tapered post with an easy to see white stripe down the center. For close in hunting, this is about the best setup imaginable.

A Feast Of .44 Loads

Leverguns can be very stubborn about what loads they will feed with some of them in .44 Magnum only accepting standard 240 grain bullet rounds. Not this custom Marlin. Most serious hunting loads in .44 Magnum are loaded to longer than standard OAL, with bullet weights up to 330 grains. The action on Ashley's DRC built .44 Magnum will even handle the extra long 330 grain Hammerheads from Garrett Cartridges.

As this is a levergun designed for up close and personal use, all groups are three shots at 25 yards. In the accompanying chart I have also listed the TKO rating for each round.

TKO stands for Taylor Knock Out and was designed by elephant hunter John "Pondoro" Taylor to give a clearer picture than muzzle energy figures of the capability of each cartridge and bullet combination. TKO numbers are a simple way of comparing load to load and cartridge to cartridge. It is found by multiplying bullet diameter times bullet weight times muzzle velocity and then dividing this number by 7000.

MARLIN 1895M .450 MARLIN/COSBY CUSTOM				
Load	MV	TKO	25 Yards	50 Yards
Hornady Factory 350 gr.	1,947	44.6	1/2"	1 1/8"
Hornady 300 gr. JFP/50.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,750	34.4	3/4"	1 1/8"
Hornady 350 gr. JFP/48.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,830	41.9	1 1/2"	1 1/8"
Speer 400 gr. JFP/46.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,743	45.6	1 1/2"	1 1/8"
Speer 400 gr. JFP/50.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,923	50.3	5/8"	1 1/8"

25 Yard groups are three shots using Ghost Ring sights. 50 yard groups use Tasco Pro-Point Red Dot Scope.

Large Frame Custom Marlin

The adoption of the .45-70 cartridge in 1873 by the U.S. Army set off a race to see which manufacturer would succeed in designing a lever-action repeating rifle large and strong enough to accept the potent Government cartridge. Marlin won that race with its Model 1881.

The later, John Browning designed Winchester 1886 was a better and stronger gun. Sparked by this competition, Marlin looked toward the future and in 1895 brought out their new large levergun with a solid-top receiver and side ejection.

The 1895 Marlin did not last very long, only until 1917, during which time it was chambered in .38-56, .40-65, .40-72, .40-82,

.45-90, .33 Winchester, and, of course, its most popular chambering, the .45-70.

In 1972 the Model 1895 was resurrected in a new and stronger version chambered in .45-70. It has been a most popular rifle among hunters who are not interested in seeing how far away they can shoot game. In 1964, the .45-70 was joined by a new cartridge, the .444 Marlin. This kinder, gentler cartridge does with a 300 grain bullet what the .45-70 does with a 400 grain bullet. If one does not need the power of the .45-70, the .444 Marlin makes a great choice.

So we now have Marlin leverguns available for hunters in .44 Magnum, .444 Marlin, and .45-70. Is there still room for improvement?



The Cosby custom is also an easy to transport takedown conversion.

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Enter The .450 Marlin

Marlin and Hornady thought so, and the result last year was a new chambering for the 1895. The new cartridge is the .450 Marlin, and with its 350 grain bullet is a dead ringer for heavy loads in the .45-70 offered by Buffalo Bore and Cor-Bon. So why the .450 Marlin? The answer is simple. Marlin wanted a heavy load for the .45-70 but both Marlin and Hornady were concerned about the possibility of someone dropping such a load in an ancient Springfield Trap-Door.

In today's litigation driven society, neither company was interested in providing an opportunity for anyone to do such a thing. Hence the .450 Marlin. It uses the same bullets as the .45-70. However, it differs from the 125 year-old cartridge by having a belt around the base above the rim that keeps it from chambering in a .45-70. And vice versa, a .45-70 will not chamber in a .450.

Cosby Custom .450 Marlin

I had the opportunity last year to thoroughly test and develop handloads for Marlin's 1895 chambered in .450 Marlin. Now from Cosby's Custom Guns comes the first customized Marlin .450. Brian Cosby starts with the standard Model 1895M .450 Marlin and performs many custom features.

The action is smoothed, additional ports are added at the end of the barrel to help control felt recoil, the hammer and trigger

are polished and jeweled, as is the loading gate. Swivel studs are added to the stock and forearm to accept a detachable sling, and once again, we see the installation of the excellent Express Sight Systems Ghost Ring rear and post front sight.

To make this .450 Marlin Custom even more versatile, an Express Sight Systems Lever Scout scope base is fitted on the barrel. The Scout concept calls for an intermediate eye relief scope to be mounted forward of the receiver with the advantage being quicker target acquisition and also being able to keep both eyes open and see around the scope. This really helps in close-up hunting situations.

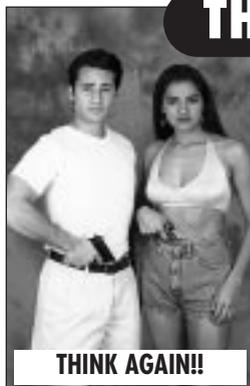
Cosby also specializes in take-down leverguns and he has performed his magic on this .450 Marlin. Forward of the front sight one finds a double barrel band that encircles both barrel and magazine tube. Directly behind this at the bottom of the magazine tube is a spring-loaded plunger. When this is pressed, the magazine tube can be moved forward about 1 inch which allows the barrel, magazine tube, and forearm to be unscrewed from the action. The action must be opened before this is accomplished.

A magazine cutoff allows cartridges to remain in the tube as the take down process is accomplished. Cosby has a take-up system that allows adjustment should any looseness occur. I have tested several of Cosby's custom leverguns and sixguns over the years and have always found them to have one thing in common and that is excellent work-

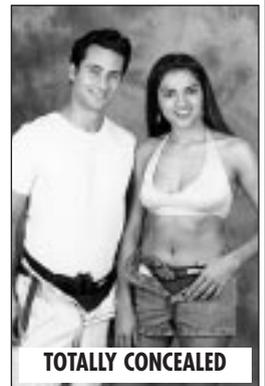
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manship. He is highly recommended.

In test firing the Cosby Custom .450 Marlin, I fired it at 25 yards with the Ghost Ring sights and at 50 yards with a Tasco Pro-Point Red Dot scope mounted on the Lever Scout Base. At 50 yards the red dot covers approximately 4 inches. Once again, this is for fast target acquisition and not for punching small groups in paper.

Still More Power — .475 GNR

You say you still want more? We have taken care of the black bear and the boar, so how about something for buffalo, namely a custom Marlin 1895 chambered in a new wildcat cartridge? While the cartridge is new to the Marlin, it has been advanced by several wildcatters as it is such an easy cartridge to form. Gary Reeder Custom Guns now offers the Marlin Buffalo Hunter chambered in .475 GNR.

This cartridge is simply the .45-70 case blown out straight to hold a bullet of .475 caliber. Brass is easy to obtain either by using .45-70 cases or better yet ordering properly headstamped and formed .475 GNR brass from Starline. Hard cast gas checked bullets are offered CPBC (Cast Performance Bullet Company), as well as 400 grain jacketed bullets from both Hornady and Speer.

The jacketed bullets are designed for use in the .475 Linebaugh, and a call to Allan Jones of the Speer Technical Staff and editor of the *Speer Reloading Manual*, confirmed

that the 400 grain .475 Speer flat-nosed bullet should be fine for such large critters as elk, caribou and moose. But it is not recommended for the big bears nor for any of the African game that can bite back.

The origin of the Buffalo Hunter goes back a couple of years to Reeder's Alaskan Classic with a 16 inch barrel chambered in .444 Marlin and .45-70. This newer version on the Marlin Model 1895 features a heavy 18 inch barrel, full length magazine tube that holds five rounds and an especially engraved receiver with buffalo on both sides — Cape buffalo on one and American bison on the other.

The action is smooth, all metal parts are beautifully refinished, and the stock is refinished to soft satin luster and fitted with a Pachmayr Decelerator pad. And to show that great minds think alike, this big-bore bear/boar/buffalo blaster is also equipped with an Express Sight Systems Ghost Ring rear sight. Reloading dies for the .475 GNR are available from Redding.

Reeder specializes in custom single action Ruger and Freedom Arms sixguns, single-shot Contenders and Encores, and Marlin leverguns. Many of these are chambered in one of several proprietary wildcat cartridges. He has a well-deserved reputation for providing beautiful custom firearms at less than high dollar custom prices.

Shooting the relatively lightweight .475 GNR from the bench is not what one would call a pleasant experience. Recoil is heavy though not punishing and would probably be hardly noticed when shooting big game. Gas check

bullets are a must when driving cast bullets at these velocities. Cast Performance Bullet Co. offers both a 375 and a 425 grain .475 inch bullet of the LBT Long Flat Nose design.

So there you have it. The factory Marlin leverguns, small or large frame, are mighty nice and deservedly popular. If your taste and your budget permit, they can be made even nicer by one of these three talented custom gunsmiths. You may ask which of these splendid rifles was my favorite. The answer is simple — all of them!



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RIFLES

HANDGUNS

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ON A POSITIVE NOTE

continued from page 6

waiting, he would reluctantly head for home. But not before spreading his old hunting coat on the ground by the side of the path.

At first opportunity, Bill would drive back to where he had last seen the hound. There on the tattered coat would be the old

dog. Foot-sore, hoarse from sounding all night, but thumping his tail in delight to see his master's return. That's my favorite image of Grandpa Bill.

Even before my father had signed off on my privilege to handle firearms in his absence, I would be allowed to investigate the little Stevens. You see, it was absent

firing pin and a couple of other small parts. Nevertheless, I was intoxicated with the rifle, and enjoyed vivid imaginings of stalking the wild places with my mighty Stevens .22.

The Little Scout was actually my first gunsmithing project. I found an ad for the needed parts, and put together enough cash gleaned from mowing lawns in the neighborhood to place an order.

If you haven't given up reading this yet, you may wonder why I'm boring you. The lesson to be learned here is that this modest gift from a man I never had the opportunity to know was one of the sparks that kindled my interest in shooting.

Our kids today are the targets of a dedicated effort on the part of many in the teaching profession and elsewhere to turn them against firearms and the shooting sports. After a few years in this system, it's no wonder that little Johnny doesn't want a .22 rifle. He wants a video game instead.

So what are we going to do to reverse this trend? I may ruffle some feathers here, but sending more money to the NRA is not the answer. What is needed is personal interaction.

Certainly, if you are a parent or grandparent, you've tried to engage your youngsters in shooting or hunting. Some of us aren't parents, but that does not remove from us the onus to counteract whenever possible the anti-gun propaganda these kids are bombarded with.



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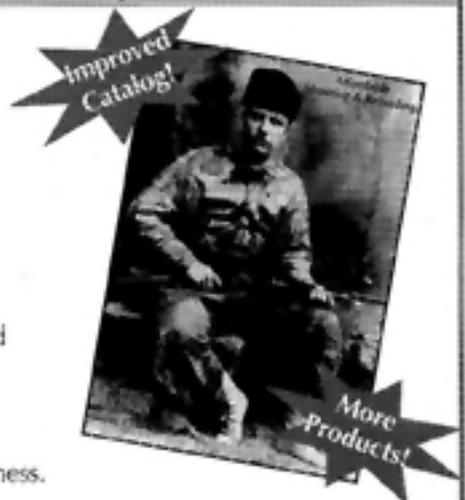
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Do your best to find a youngster who you might be able to take shooting. If you don't have friends with children who are amenable to this, there are other alternatives. The Boy Scouts have long been a great avenue to reach young men with the straight story of the important role of firearms in this country.

As a Scout, I was fortunate to attend a demonstration by a local sportsman who did a splendid job of teaching us the history of the rifle, from flint longrifles to the M1 Garand. It was such a tremendous experience that I remember it to this day.

That trim little Stevens, the generous gift of a man I never knew, set me on the path to become a shooter and outdoorsman. I have made similar gifts to several deserving young men, and I'm always on the lookout for another such opportunity.

We Americans are the recipients of a legacy of freedom. Freedom won and preserved at great cost by men with rifles. If we fail to pass on this legacy, if we fail to spark that lifelong interest in a young and fertile mind, we will have held in scant regard the gifts of our birth.

INDUSTRY NEWS

New And Improved 1911s

Springfield Armory has just announced that all of its 1911 pattern pistols are soon to receive a package of enhancements bringing them more in-line with the most popular custom modified 1911 pistols.

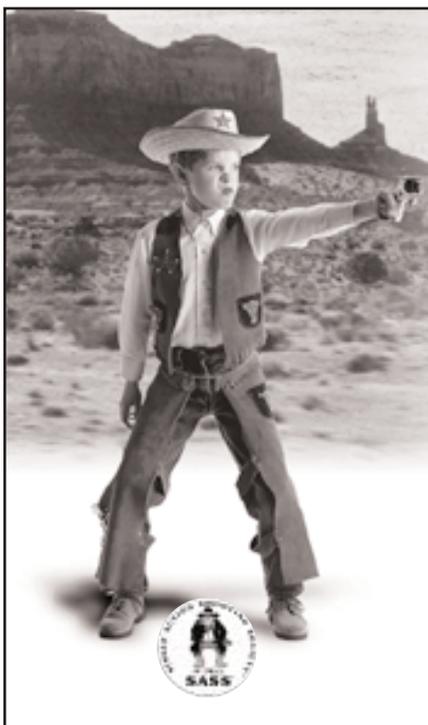


These features will include an ambidextrous thumb safety, Torx-head stock screws, and a new front-strap profile allowing a higher grip for improved recoil control and other benefits. Other less noticeable changes, many of which have already been incorporated, include Springfield's I.L.S. on-board key lock safety, loaded chamber indicator, Titanium firing pin and heavy-duty spring as well as a carry bevel treatment.

The good news here is that the consumer will find all these modern features right out-of-the box on the new Springfields. The other side of the coin is that hidebound old traditionalists like myself who have long admired the Springfield guns as being the closest thing to a GI 1911, need to jump into action and pick up one of the current production guns before these changes are completely instituted.

continued on page 64

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You Can Win This **ROBAR CUSTOM X-TREME DUTY PISTOL**

Springfield Armory's new X-Treme Duty pistol has been met with ready acceptance by shooters across the country. Right out of the box, it's a darn fine service pistol with a number of very desirable features.

The Robar Companies, the well-known shop of Robbie Barrkman, was anxious to see what they could do in the way of a custom X-Treme Duty pistol. The result is mighty pleasant to behold.

Starting with the frame, Robar's technicians built up a "beavertail" extension to help guide the web of the hand into its proper place during fast holster work, while adding significantly to shooting comfort as well. The trigger guard was rounded and reshaped for easier re-holstering, and

all gripping surfaces of the frame were covered with Robar's unique epoxy texturing for a slip-proof grip.

A feed package and trigger job were next, followed by the installation of Express Sight System's big dot tritium express sights. The only thing left was to top off the entire job with Robar's self-lubricating and corrosion proof NP3 finish. This is a great looking semiauto, and the lucky winner will have to put up with a lot of "oohs" and "aahs" each time he takes this to the range.

For information on customizing your Springfield XD or other pistol, shotgun or rifle, give the guys at Robar a call, [623] 581-2648, or check them out on the Web: www.robarguns.com.

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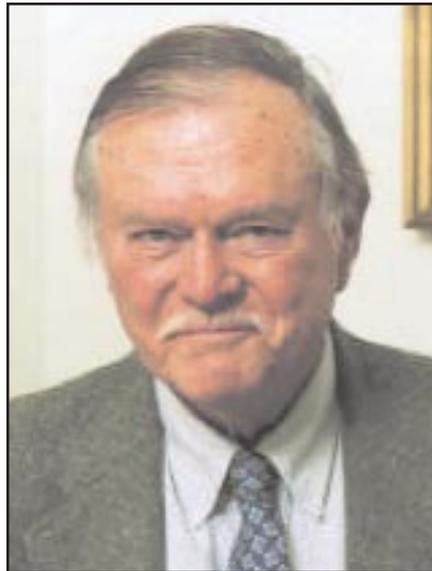
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William B. Ruger

William B. Ruger, perhaps the most influential figure in the world of firearms manufacturing since J.M. Browning, died on Saturday, July 6, 2002. Ruger was 86 years of age.

Ruger's name came to public prominence in 1949, when along with his partner Alexander Sturm, he introduced the Ruger MKI self-loading pistol to the American market.

In the post World War II years, new products were slow to arrive on the commercial market. Nearly all commercial firearms production had been dropped for the war effort, and Ruger's new pistol was received with eagerness. It proved to be extremely accurate, easy to maintain, and best of all, it was priced right.

The success of the MKI pistol provided the momentum to allow Ruger to introduce one popular design after another. A measure of Ruger's inventiveness was his use of non-traditional materials and manufacturing processes to produce good quality products at a market-beating price.

Ruger firearms have remained ever popular, despite the fact Ruger's business politics did not always endeared him to his customers. Regardless, his legacy is America's most productive firearms manufactory.



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RANGEFINDERS

continued from page 24

I like to arrange targets at random distances for .22 rifle practice. I fire first; asking the rangefinder to tell me how far the shot was afterwards. Two hundred yards is not out too far for this type of shooting with today's .22-rimfire ammo. After that, it gets tricky, but not impossible, to bring bullet and tomato can together.

Picket Pins and Extreme Range

On an Idaho varmint shoot, I had a chance to throw Winchester 40 grain lead bullets at far-away picket pins (ground squirrels). Shooting a Ruger 10/22 treated to Butler Creek's target conversion with heavy fluted barrel, I tipped one over at 247 yards. You guessed it. The distance was checked with a rangefinder, the log it stood on serving as a clear marker.

Shooting far, really far, in the mountains at inanimate targets with safe backstops is challenging and downright fascinating, even to the most practiced rifleman. My friends and I have played this game for years, never tiring of it. Now, it's more fun than ever, thanks to the rangefinder verifying how far the long shots really are.

No more, "I'll bet that was 450 yards!" Forget that. Sight the rangefinder on the mark and know how far the target was. Guessing until the moon turns to gold is okay, but give me a rangefinder. It'll put an end to surmising pronto.

Rangefinders go way beyond the scope of this little campfire chat. Last week, for example, when a batch of Winchester's new high-grade match .22 rimfire ammo arrived, I wanted to find out how the stuff would work at my own normal hunting ranges, in the field, not at the target range. But I needed to know just how far I was shooting. The Yardage Pro told the tale — exactly.

I've used the rangefinder for sighting in when marked-off distances weren't available. My portable benchrest is ideal for this work. Take a reading with the rangefinder, then set the target up, not at a guessed distance, but right on the money. Likewise in a hunting camp. How many hunters have flown or driven in, not knowing for certain if their guns were still shooting on the money?

Especially after a firearm has made a trip in the hold of an airplane, a checkout is important. The little rangefinder is a real friend here. No more guessing how far away the paper plate with the orange marker dot lies from the muzzle. Take a quick reading and know for sure.

Mine has seen a lot of action and it's destined for much more. The modern rangefinder, with its space age laser accuracy, is a tool, not a toy. Sometimes it's used just for fun or to simply satisfy curiosity, but it also has many serious applications, making it a worthy addition to the high-tech world of outdoor equipment.

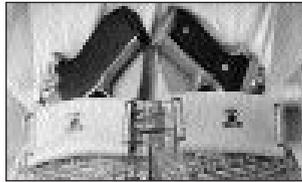


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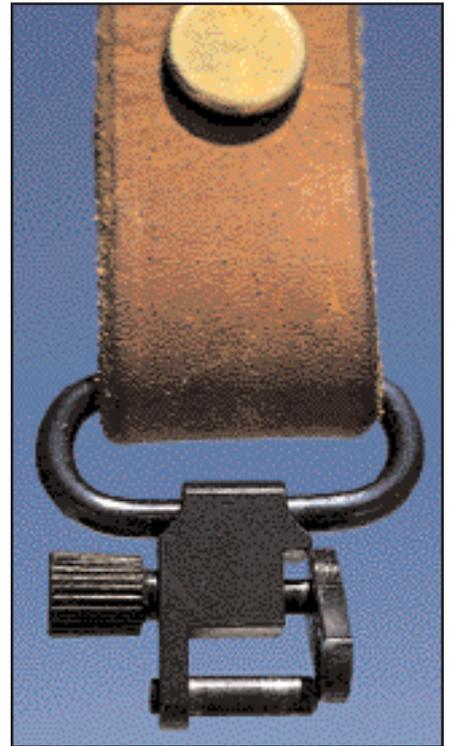
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DON'T LEAVE BEHIND

continued from page 37



Good locking swivels such as this by Uncle Mike's can prevent a damaged rifle and destroyed scope.

wet or fouled bore. Because the Rapid Rod is rigid, it can take care of jobs that will foil the common pull-through designs on the market.

Break-Free CLP And Patches

Because of the few shots fired over the period of a normal hunt, there's no need to clean a bore unless it has been exposed to moisture. Break-Free CLP (Cleaner-Lubricant-Preservative) is probably the most universally useful compound one can add to your kit. It penetrates and displaces corrosion, water, dirt, and powder residue, and leaves behind a highly effective protective and lubricating film.

I carry the tiny 2/3 ounce bottle of Break Free, and it holds plenty of CLP for any hunting trip. And by all means don't forget to pack 20 to 30 patches with you — the 100 percent cotton flannel kind — and if you forget them, cut some patches from paper towels.

Locking Sling Swivels

We were standing around talking about the morning's deer hunt when my slung rifle suddenly cartwheeled off my shoulder and landed hard in the rocks of the Rocky Mountains. The front, non-locking sling swivel had twisted off. Result? Mashed scope. Deformed muzzle crown. Heartbreak at seeing a fine rifle in such a state. Fortunately I wasn't that far from home.

There are still a lot of non-locking swivels

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on the market — don't let this happen to you. Uncle Mike's makes what I consider a fool-proof, locking design under the name of "Super Swivel." I've been using them for years, and haven't had any problems. Whatever the brand, fit your rifle or shotgun this season with *locking* sling swivels.

Screwdriver Set And Leatherman-Type Tool

Guns are held together by screws. Screws come loose at the most inconvenient times. Also, should you have to disassemble a firearm during the hunt, you'll need a few proper fitting screwdriver bits and possibly Allen wrenches to get the job done. At home, I keep a complete set of interchangeable Brownell's Magna-Tip screwdriver bits and one handle. Before leaving on a hunt, I take the four or five bits that fit my firearm plus the handle and add them to my kit.

The screwdriver stays in camp, but I do carry a multi-tool Leatherman on my hip. The Leatherman tool, or any similar high quality multi-tool, has saved my bacon more than once in the field. It is essential gear, and the quality of the knife blade is sufficient to butcher a deer, or with a sharpener, even larger game.

Against Wet Weather

Weather can and usually does turn a bit nasty during the fall and winter hunting seasons. Stainless steel and synthetic stocks are

almost impervious to moisture, but optics aren't. Neither are all those fine blued steel, walnut stocked guns. I like to give my firearms a coat of hard automotive wax or Johnson Trewax before the season. Hard wax tends to hold up better than any other preservative in the elements.

To keep wet weather out of the bore, I place a piece of common electrical tape over the muzzle and wrap it once around with more tape to secure it in place. You can shoot right through it. To carry some tape with you, just take a few wraps around the barrel near the muzzle.

Little "Muzzle Mitts" that look like condoms for mice are an alternative but are somewhat hard to find. To keep the lens of rifle scopes dry, I fit a pair of Butler Creek "Blizzard" lens caps to my scope if the weather looks threatening. They spring open with just a touch, and don't take up any room in a pack if they're not needed.

Bipods

When it comes to setting up a shot on game at a distance, nothing is steadier than a bipod. Today, bipods are available in a variety of designs to fit any hunting style. For many years, I resisted the addition of a bipod to my rifle. I didn't like their added weight and bulk, so I carried a set of "Steady Stix" shooting sticks in my rucksack.

Composed of short sections of aluminum tubing held together by shock cord, Steady Stix shake out in a split second to form a

sturdy crossed-stick shooting platform, adjustable for any height or type of terrain. Stoney Point produces another form of the crossed-sticks bipod.

The other common design is exemplified by the popular Harris Bipod, Versa-Pod, and similar units that attach to the front sling swivel. I still find them heavy and bulky but they're worth their weight in platinum when you need them. Versa-Pod has come up with an interesting design. A small adapter is fitted to the sling swivel and the bipod itself is quickly slipped on and off the adapter as needed. Whatever the design, pack a bipod.

Shell Carriers

I've seen it all — six or seven cartridges bound together with a rubber band; loose cartridges carried inside a plastic bag; Poncho Villa type bandoliers; hand tooled leather belt cases that accept a full 20 round box of cartridges. It took many years for American manufacturers to offer us the classic, compact, two-level belt carrier that places 10 rounds immediately at your fingertips. Traditionally, this design was made of oiled leather, and oils and cartridges aren't the best of matches. Today, this classic is offered in cotton and Cordura nylon. It is the most functional carrier I have ever used, and mounted on your belt, protects your ammunition thoroughly from the elements and temperature extremes.

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Rangefinders, GPS Units, Radios

Rangefinders have become so compact and affordable today that they can be considered indispensable tools of the hunt. No one is an adequate judge of range under all weather and topographical conditions, particularly if one is hunting outside his familiar home range.

If you have time to range an animal, by all means do so. It's humane and responsible sportsmanship. Bushnell and Leica seem to be the current leaders in the laser rangefinder field.

GPS units, too, have become more compact, much more user friendly, and less expensive. Between the Garmin and Magellan brands, you can find every possible level of sophistication.

I currently carry the shirt pocket size Garmin Etrex Venture model. It's not cluttered with extraneous basemaps that I'll never use and it does everything it should — like getting me back to the truck at the end of the day. It even offers Solunar type tables for the best times of the day to hunt and fish, and you can download map data from a computer if it's needed.

The only problem I've experienced with GPS units is that one is liable to become too dependent upon them, and not pay sufficient attention in the field to direction and natural landmarks. Plus, being electronic instruments, they can and

have failed. The solution is to always carry a map and compass. The magnetic North Pole doesn't need batteries.

Motorola revolutionized communications in the field when they introduced their "Talkabout" FRS sport radios that did not require an FCC license to operate. We keep a cell phone in the truck these days, but carry "Talkabouts" while tramping around in the field. We don't use them for idle conversation, but when you need help in packing out an animal or have a medical problem, those little, cigarette pack sized radios are priceless. Today, there are a number of brands, power ratings and models available. Don't leave home without one.

Survival And First Aid Kits

There are still a lot of hunters who go afield in a state of denial as if they'll never get lost or never get injured. Be prepared. Pack a small survival kit and first aid kit. The best ones are assembled at home. The compact survival kit pictured here measures 7/8x2 3/4x3 3/4 inches, and was assembled by one of my hunting buddies, Bill Poston. In and around that little aluminum box (Swedish military surplus or metal soap container) are the following:

- Miniature "Photon" flashlight
- Signal mirror
- Single edge razor blade
- Spark-Lite fire starter flint

- Spark-Lite tinders
- NATO lifeboat matches (6)
- Wire survival saw
- Snares (2)
- Fishing line, hooks, flies, sinkers and spinning lure
- Brunton 15mm compass
- Needles & sewing thread
- Heavy duty sewing awl
- Heavy bead cord
- Safety pins (6)
- Aluminum foil
- Thin pencil
- Write-in-the-rain paper
- Whistle
- 100 MPH duct tape
- Electrical tape (16 inches)
- Parachute cord (14 feet)
- Five Heavy rubber bands cut from a bicycle tube

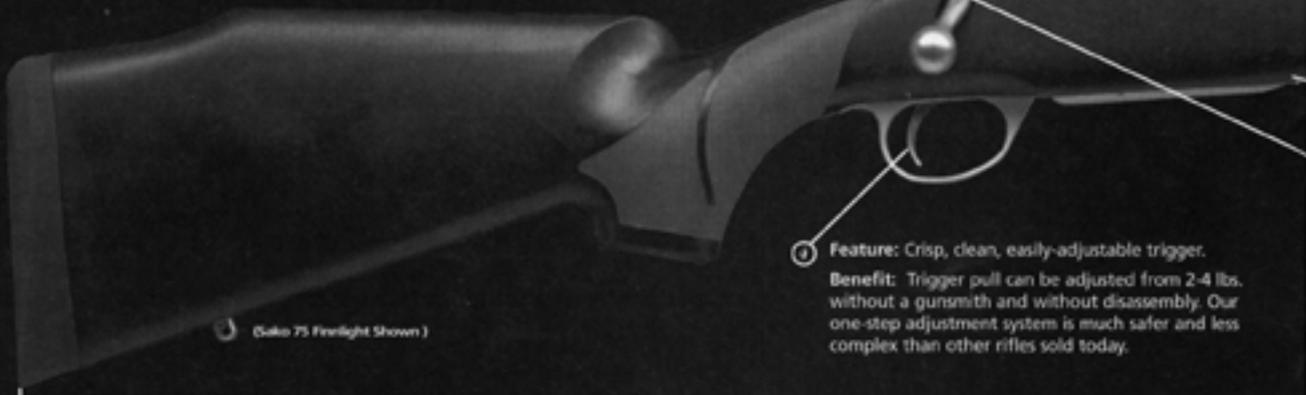
Poston carries water purifying tablets in his comparable sized first aid kit. I would add a thin, Mylar survival blanket to the outside of his kit, but otherwise his miniature survival kit is amazingly well stocked. You can make one too, and indeed you should.

Compact first aid kits are readily available on the market. What they lack are medications such as antibiotics and pain killers, so supplement their basic contents with the help of your physician and prescriptions.

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Packing It

Okay, how do we pack all this gear? I've used inexpensive German ruck sacks with removable rubber liners for years, but I can't find them in the USA.

Possibly the best thought out pack today for the hunter is the Master Guide Pack made by Crooked Horn Outfitters and car-

ried by Cabela's. It incorporates special pockets for knives, flashlights, spotting scopes, two 20-ounce water bottles, maps, gloves, licenses, and wallets. It's quiet, waterproof, comfortable, comes in a variety of camo patterns and expands from 1,150 to 1,950 cubic inches by loosening some compression straps.

Start A List Today

Sit down before the season opens and begin fleshing out your own personal list of field essentials. It won't be complete the first season and maybe not even by the second, but over the years, it will build, be refined and become an invaluable guide, particularly at 2 a.m. on the opening day of the deer season.



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6 Feature: All-steel "Optilock" scope mounting system with unique tapered dovetail rails.
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7 Feature: Legendary all-steel Sako action with three massive locking lugs.
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8 Feature: Synthetic stock has soft rubber inlays on fore-end and pistol grip.
Benefit: All Sako Synthetics have distinctive styling and a positive, comfortable grip in any weather.

9 Feature: Fully free-floating match-grade, hammer-forged barrel.
Benefit: Sako's true-match-grade barrels are famous for their accuracy. Maintaining the tightest tolerances during manufacturing translates to the tightest groups shot on paper. No rifle leaves the factory without passing a one minute of angle shooting test. Our obsession makes the Sako 75 a tack-driver.

10 Feature: 2-position safety and integral Key Concept™ lock.
Benefit: The Sako 75 safety is either on or off. This positive system uses a separate bolt-release button: cartridges can be loaded or unloaded with the safety on. Sako's patented Key Concept™ is the first ever integrated rifle lock.

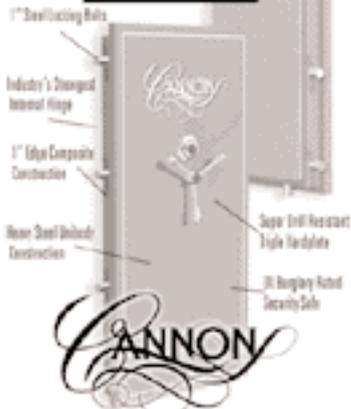
11 Feature: All stainless models feature Sako's unique external and internal stainless steel construction.
Benefit: Constructing the entire gun inside and out with stainless steel makes the Sako 75 perfect for a snowy Elk hunt or chasing Caribou on the wet tundra. The only thing the Sako 75 won't take is being left at home.

12 Feature: Highest resale value.
Benefit: You won't want to part with your Sako, but it is good to know that Sako has one of the highest resale values of any bolt action rifle. A high-quality Sako is a good-quality investment.

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FOUR-PLAY continued from page 53

The Goodies

We felt the Workhorse by E-Z-GO represented a good example of this new breed of vehicle. At about five to six thousand dollars with a full gas tank, they cost a bit more than a fully equipped ATV cycle, but the amenities are lengthy.

Our test vehicle sat two comfortably, with plenty of room in the back for gear, guns, ammo, targets and game (if we got lucky). The cargo bed — get ready for this — had a hydraulic dump feature. No kidding. You can stuff about 250 pounds or so there and when you arrive, just a touch of the toggle switch and it all slides nicely earthward. We dumped various piles of wood, rocks, camping gear and a few kids, and pronounced it a good idea all around.

Our test Workhorse also had the optional roof and windshield. We didn't think the windshield was really necessary until it got chilly and then that windbreak felt very comfy. We'd call it a "must-have" option, along with the roof.

"And perhaps the term, little truck, is what suits them best. Once home from the field, the Workhorse was put to good use by a neighbor to carry and "deploy" sod — he's a former military officer. "Reminds me of my M-60 tank," he'd mutter."

Headlights, horn, reverse, fuel gauge, brush guard for engine and drive belt are standard, along with a mini-receiver hitch, but we also added a winch. Did we ever need it? Nope. Was it comforting to have? You bet. However, being the experimenters we are, we winched about everything that wasn't nailed down and found it would tug the Workhorse out of a pretend "stuck" easily. Cheap insurance on any of these little trucks.

And perhaps the term, little truck, is what suits them best. Once home from the field, the Workhorse was put to good use

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by a neighbor to carry and "deploy" sod — he's a former military officer. It made about 400 trips from the front yard to the back yard and the dump feature worked great. To say he lusted after it would be putting it lightly. "Reminds me of my M-60 tank," he'd mutter.

The operation of the Workhorse is unusual if you're not familiar with golf carts. Even though it's a gasoline engine (four stroke and very quiet) the engine quits running when you take your foot off the throttle. Push the gas down and the engine starts instantly and off you go. Which means it takes getting used to but after a short time you begin to enjoy the fact it's quiet when you stop. The transmission is actually a transaxle and would qualify as an "automatic" in the real world. One speed forward and one in reverse. There's plenty of oomph and in all honesty, the 15 mph top speed is fast enough.

Sporting Clays

Now, for the real fun. It seems Sporting Clays is such an equipment-intensive activity that, like cowboy shooting, people have taken to making and buying all kinds of carts and vehicles to tote all the stuff involved. E-Z-GO saw what was going on and introduced the Clays Car®.

Basically a Workhorse with a stiffer suspension to handle all those guns and gear, the Clays Car sits up to four and has nifty racks for everyone's shotguns. Spread around in convenient spots are racks to hold shotgun shells and even a cooler. It's quiet and with the big tires offers a nimble and delicate footprint for heavily traveled paths along the course. The Sporting Clays shooters are taking to it in droves. It sure beats slogging along, dragging a case of shells, cooler and a shotgun while the temperature hits 100. Maybe the golfers have known something all along?

Final Thoughts

With an Advantage® Classic Camo finish available, along with a lusty forest green and another color or two, the Workhorse is pretty enough for anyone's tastes. We confess we were awfully spoiled while we had ours and there wasn't a dry eye in the place when the mean man from E-Z-GO picked it up. This new generation of ATV adds a civilized way for an elder statesman to enjoy the hunting field. Or, for that manner, anyone who is tired of being bounced around on a cycle just might find a little truck like the Workhorse just the ticket. Heck, maybe the wife will come along too?



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THE NEW M1 GARAND continued from page 49

packed in M1 clips. The clips became so common that their lack was never a problem.

The last shot fired from an M1 causes the empty clip to be ejected out the top along with a distinctive *ping* sound. Some concern was raised by reports that this ping sound was used by enemy soldiers to identify when an individual soldier had emptied his rifle so that his position could be attacked.

My personal combat experience makes me doubt if that scenario ever actually happened. In the clamor of a battle, such noises and their exact location would be virtually impossible to distinguish even at close range.

Besides, the time it takes to reload an M1 is well under the time it takes a sprinter to cover 25 yards. The bottom line is that the ping of the clip on ejection is not and never was a big problem except in the mind of some paranoid troops and pseudo-expert desk jockeys.

The en-bloc clip magazine system had several other draw backs. One is that the rifle could not have a scope or night vision device mounted over its receiver, where it is the most convenient and efficient, because it would interfere with clip loading and ejection. As a result, sniper versions of the M1 (M1C and M1D) had their scopes mounted awkwardly on the left side of the rifle.

The en-bloc clip system also made it difficult to top up the magazine of the rifle during a lull in the fighting, what is now called a "tactical reload." Most troops would just empty their partially loaded magazine in the direction of the enemy and then reload with a full clip. Such wasting of ammunition could be critical in some situations.

When the replacement for the M1 was designed and adopted — the M14 — it used a detachable 20 round box magazine optionally loaded with Mauser type five round stripper clips.

Now Hold On There Mac

The M1's en-bloc clip system is not all bad. Indeed it has several advantages. It is extremely fast to reload since there is no empty magazine to remove.

Basically to reload an M1 all one must do is shove the whole eight round clip of cartridges into the top of the rifle until it clicks and then get your thumb out of the way so the bolt can close and chamber the top round. It is accomplished in a flash. Because it is faster to reload, an M1 shooter can equal the rate of fire of a shooter using an M14 or FAL, in spite of their larger magazine capacities.

The M1 had other minor quirks, but as the war progressed the rifles were steadily improved to the point where most of these problems went away. Probably the biggest problem during World War II and Korea with the M1 was not a problem with the rifle but with the corrosively primed ammunition issued. The latter deposited corrosive salts not only in the rifle's bore but also in its gas system.

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Thus the soldier had the added task of cleaning the gas system as well as the rifle's bore. If he fell behind in that task, the operating rod would quickly rust and create functioning problems. All our .30 Carbine ammunition of the time had non-corrosive priming. The retention of corrosive primers in .30-'06 ammunition was inexcusable.

First Blood

The first use of the M1 in combat was in the Philippines with the few on hand when the Japanese invaded. In the European Theater it was first used in North Africa, fighting French Colonial Vichy troops in November of 1942. It first saw action against the Germans in Tunisia in January 1943. In the Pacific its first major use was by U.S. Army troops supporting the Marines at Guadalcanal in October of '42.

Incredibly, in spite of the availability of M1s, Marines at Guadalcanal had been issued obsolete World War I M1903 rifles. I wonder how many Marine lives were lost because of this decision?

Some military leaders of the time thought the M1 was not accurate enough, not reliable enough, too difficult to maintain, or that it would waste too much ammunition.

Marines who saw the M1 in action in Army hands soon learned it was vastly superior to the M1903 on all counts but weight. Combat Marines demanded M1 Garands and soon got their own in time for the Solomon Islands Campaign.

As the war progressed, the superiority of the M1 over our enemy's rifles became obvious. American units could slug it out with larger size enemy units armed with bolt action rifles and still prevail. The Japanese soon learned that frontal assaults on M1 armed troops meant little short of annihilation.

New Conflicts — Same Garand

V-J Day brought only a short respite for the mighty M1. The M1 soon went back to war in Korea and was one of the shining stars among the small arms used in that war. Frontal assaults against M1 armed troops, this time by the Chinese and North Koreans, had the same results as in the Pacific.

A properly maintained M1 would work reliably even in bitter cold conditions that caused other weapons to fail. John Garand's rifle continued to earn the warmest affections of its users.

The M1 Garand continued to soldier on in the early days of Vietnam in the hands of the Vietnamese and American Special Forces advisors but was quickly overshadowed by more modern weapons. Still, the M1 Garand again gave stalwart service and was often the favored weapon of the Special Forces advisors of the time. Fortunately by then non-corrosive ammunition was standard.

There is no question the M1 was one of the greatest infantry rifles of all time. It

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was such a quantum leap forward over its bolt action predecessors that a well trained company of M1 armed infantry could give a modern company of M16A2 armed infantry a run for their money right to this day. Indeed in some circumstances they might prevail.

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I should also note the new Springfield Armory M1 qualifies for use in the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP) service rifle matches and also for the special John C. Garand matches which are restricted to obsolete service grade rifles.

Standard .30-'06 M2 ball ammunition is notoriously poor in the accuracy department. If you want to make any M1 Garand shoot well, use match grade factory ammunition or handloads with 168 to 180 grain bullets.

I get my best performance with this rifle and my personal M1s with loads using 173 to 175 grain boattail match bullets.

Springfield Armory has done an exceptional job with their new M1 Garands. I am certain even the late John C. Garand himself would be proud of them.



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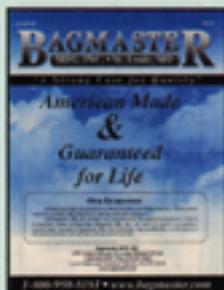
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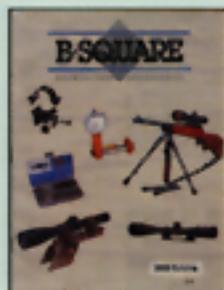
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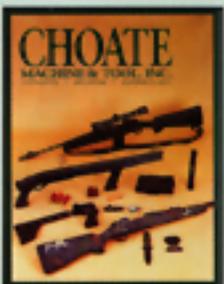
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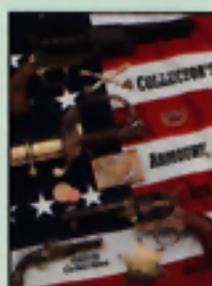
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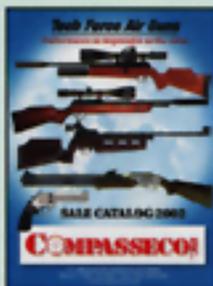
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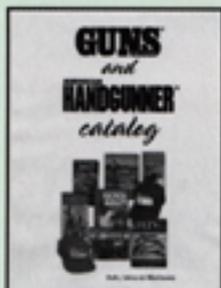
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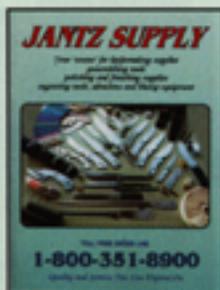
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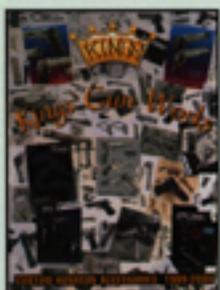
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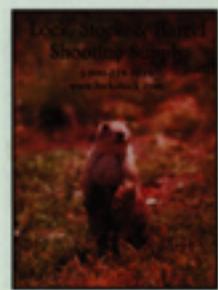
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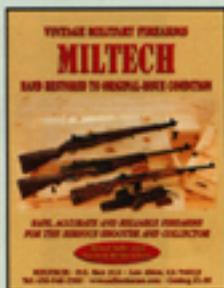
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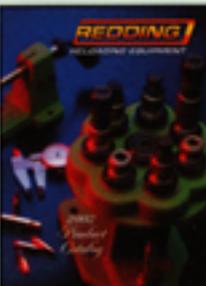


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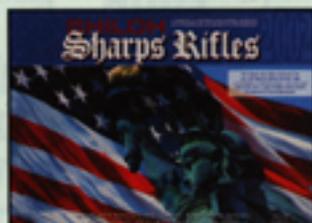


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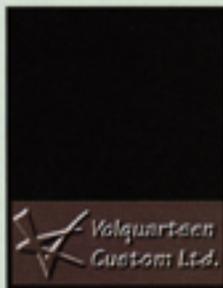
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HANDGUNS BY MASSAD AYOOB

Shooting instruction from his father sparked a lifelong interest. Today, Massad Ayoob is an award-winning practical shooter, author of numerous books on the subject, and through his Lethal Force Institute has taught many thousands of students.

When Great Ones Pass

Whatever our sport, we want our heroes frozen in time, the way we remember them. But nature does not cooperate, and a departure time comes to each of us. When that happens to the great ones in the game, all we can do is count the memories, and sometimes tabulate the lessons they've taught us. A case in point is the recent loss of two famous handgunners who made a difference.



“Guy Hogue was a friendly and generous man. He turned the business over to his fine sons, who have done a great job of running it, and he did it in time to have a few years of peaceful retirement.”

Frankie May

Word reaches us by Internet that Frank May died peacefully in Florida at the age of 76. Frank was an NYPD instructor and a linchpin of the department's pistol team in its most glorious days. To my knowledge, he was the first man to ever win the national police revolver championship two years in a row.

Frankie May broke the mold. His version of kneeling was to simply drop down on his right knee with the sole of his left foot flat, and point his .38 at the target with his arms stuck straight out.

He would then proceed to roll the trigger of his 6 inch S&W Model 19 and obliterate the X-ring 25 yards downrange. People would say, “Frankie, you're shooting the kneeling position wrong,” and then realize they were critiquing a national champion who had just outperformed their old technique with his new one.

I learned this technique from Frank back in the early '70s on the PPC circuit and have used a variation of it ever since.

Frankie was cool under stress. The first time I watched him shoot, it was Match 3 of the PPC, 18 shots kneeling, left, and right barricade from 25 yards in 90 seconds, hosted by a department that didn't allow speed-loaders. That put on some time pressure.

Frankie dropped into his patented kneeling position, stroked off a couple of shots, looked downrange with a critical eye, and held the long barrel Combat Magnum in his left hand while with his right he plucked a screw-

driver from his shirt pocket and adjusted the sights with the stopwatch still running.

And as a matter of fact, he won that particular tournament.

Guy Hogue

I was saddened to learn of the passing of Guy Hogue, the great handgun stock designer. For many years, Guy Hogue stocks were the secret of the West Coast gun cognoscenti, but their popularity at the various national championship shoots soon pollinated a taste for this fine product across the country and elsewhere. I've seen Hogue-stocked handguns carried with pride from England (in the old days) to South Africa.

Most stocks either look great or feel great, but not both at once. Guy's work was an exception. I had a pair of his hand-made, finely checkered walnut stocks on the Ron Power Custom S&W .38 I used to fire the first shot at the first Bianchi Cup tournament in 1979. Twenty years later, the more businesslike composition version of the same design, with a soft, cushy Cobblestone™ gripping surface replacing the hand checkering, was in place on my Al Greco Custom S&W Model 625 when I won Senior Champion at the IDPA Midwinter Nationals.

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Guy Hogue was a friendly and generous man. He turned the business over to his fine sons, who have done a great job of running it, and he did it in time to have a few years of peaceful retirement.

Guy Hogue and Frankie May were good men. Both were approachable and friendly. You could come up to them at a gun show or shooting match, pick their brain, and be rewarded with nuggets of wisdom that might just make you a better shooter forever after. Both men left legacies — one of quality product, the other of effective shooting techniques — that will be their memorials.



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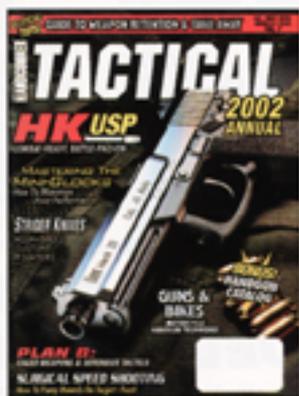
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From Beretta

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From Kahr Arms

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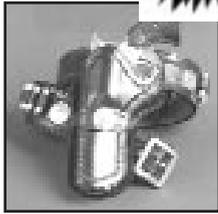
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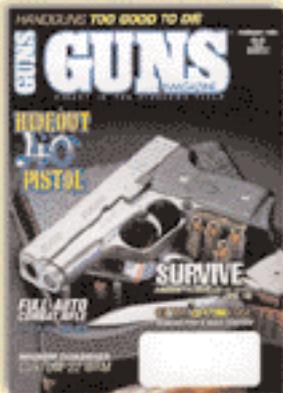
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my efforts. Joe's .357 barked and probably saved me from getting my legs injured by those teeth and claws. I learned my lesson and that .38 Super now wears a custom Wilson barrel that feeds every time.

Johnny On The Spot

Joe is the guy who takes all the pictures of me that appear in the pages of *GUNS* and *American Handgunner* as well as in my books. Joe is the guy that is always on the lookout for items that I can use, such as nearly a dozen lubricator/sizers purchased for practically nothing from various gun shows. Now I never change sizing dies. It is much simpler to loosen the two bolts and change machines instead.

Joe is the guy that sets up or puts everything together for me. I hate reading directions but he doesn't need 'em. Joe has a mechanical mind that can figure things out by simply looking at them. Joe is the guy that built the wooden fence around the backyard so I could keep my two malamutes in, and when they kept digging out under it, it was Joe that strung the electric wire to change their minds. Joe built the large doghouse to keep them dry and comfortable in bad weather. And most importantly, it was Joe checking on my house while I was travelling who prevented what could have been a disastrous fire.

When I was off in the mountains of Colorado 1,000 miles from home it was Joe who rescued me again. This time I received word that my mother had died suddenly and totally unexpectedly. Joe took me to the nearest airport, and I knew that he would get my Bronco and all my guns home. He is a man I can trust with anything I own as well as my very life.

Hard Man To Give Back To

Joe never asks anything in return. The one time I found myself on the giving instead of the receiving end, Joe even managed to turn that around.

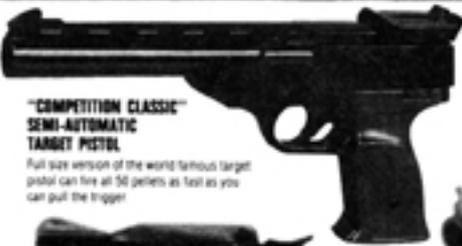
He fell on the ice one night and broke his ankle. Somehow he managed to drive his stick shift truck to my place so I could take him to the hospital. He spent his recuperative time at my house and instead of just sitting around watching television, he cast bullets by the thousands. In fact when he was laid off one winter he again spent his time hovering over the lead pot. I don't believe I will ever run out of cast bullets!

My wish for everyone is that they might enjoy the friendship of a good man like Joe. Unfortunately, there are not enough "Joes" to go around.



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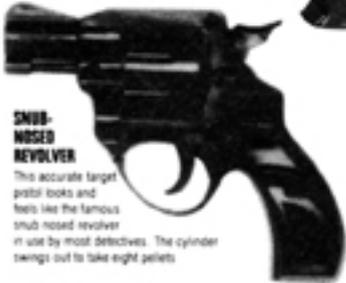
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CAMPFIRE TALES

BY JOHN TAFFIN

ME AND JOE

“Joe, you better help me get out of here. I think I’m in real trouble!”

What had started as a pleasant morning’s hunt after mule deer had suddenly taken a turn for the worse. Joe and I had left home early so we could arrive at the jump-off spot long before daylight. Just as had we had done many times before, we planned to cross a small creek and then work our way through the canyon bottom and up into the trees.

This canyon was about two miles long with steep hillsides and a very small stream running down through the center. It had yielded both mule deer and elk for us in the past.

The weather started out perfectly as it had snowed during the night, but that snow had now turned to rain. The weather was wet with the temperature somewhere in the 30s. Since we would be walking, I did not think I would need heavy clothing to keep me warm. The apparel of the day was my normal Wranglers, and a down vest with my sixgun carried in a shoulder holster to keep it dry.

The rain had stopped before we left the pickup so I surmised we would be fine. What I had not counted on was the fact that walking through the brush would cause my jeans to be thoroughly soaked before we had gone very far. Adding to my original stupidity, I kept telling myself that I would be okay and the sun would be out when we got to the end of the canyon and I would warm up.

It did not happen that way and my body was quickly feeling the effects of what was akin to standing in ice water in the wintertime. Hypothermia was a real possibility.

By the time I had decided I better turn back, I was chilled to the bone, had the shakes, and could no longer handle it on my own. Thank the Lord I was not by myself but with Joe. Joe helped me back. He got my truck warmed up, got me stripped down and warmed up in the front seat of the pickup. Joe saved my life that day.

That’s the way Joe is. He is always there when I need him.

Sometimes, even when I don’t, as on another hunt for deer using my mountain retreat 100 miles north as our base camp.

Unwelcome Visitor

Years before, I had hauled a 70 foot mobile home up to my property and covered it with a snow roof. Nothing fancy, but it was warm and dry with electricity and both a refrigerator and cookstove. Most comfortable after a hard days hunt.

This particular day we had come back for a late lunch and I had gone to the back door to gather some firewood from the pile behind our camp. Snow falling off the roof the year before had wiped out the back steps and I had not yet had time to replace them. I normally simply jumped out the back door, retrieved wood, set it inside, and then crawled back in.

I had already started my leap when I saw it! It was black, it was white, and it was furry, and I was about to land on top of it. I don’t know how I accomplished it but I managed to somehow turn around in mid-air and come back in through the door, letting out a yell at the same time. Believe me Joe’s reactions are every bit as good or better than mine. He was already running down the hallway with his Dan Wesson .357 Magnum drawn from its shoulder holster and held in the ready position with both hands and pointing straight up.

“Joe! Whatever You Do, Don’t Shoot!”

I could see our hunting trip ending very quickly if that skunk did his thing. Joe did not shoot and neither did the skunk and we very gratefully stood by the back door and watched as he slowly walked on down through the brush. I was more than happy to leave him alone.

Value Of Good Friends And Wheelguns

Years ago, Joe and I had a special permit to spotlight varmints in the desert south of town. It was our practice on warm summer evenings to hit the area around midnight with spotlights, sixguns and single shots. Every night there were jackrabbits, and about every third night we would pick up a badger or coyote.

This particular night I shot a badger, then grabbed the flashlight and a Colt .38 Super, and headed out in the sagebrush to find it. It would be better to say he found me.

As I shined the light in his direction, he was coming at me with jaws snapping and those enormous front claws digging dirt. I had hit him too far back and he was not happy with me in the least. I tried to jack a round into the chamber of the .38 Super and was rewarded with a jam for

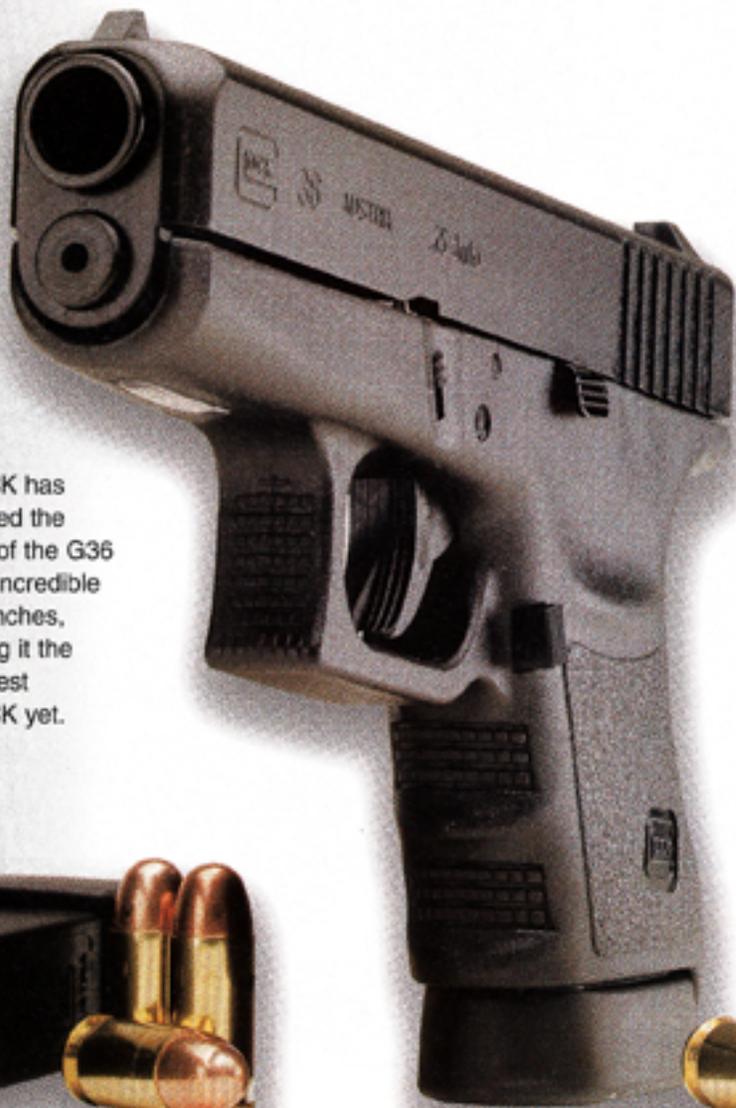
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