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# SPEAKOUT

**YOUR FORUM  
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## MARCH/APRIL

I find it quite intriguing the number of deaths per year of people killed in cell phone related automobile accidents (2,600) — “Death by Cell Phone,” the Insider, March/April issue — is nearly the same number of people who died in the World Trade Center attack. And yet, no one has donated billions of dollars for the relief of the victims and their fami-

lies, and no one has started a “War Against Cell Phone Users.” Both sets of people are just as dead. Both sets of circumstances are just as horrific — to the victims. But to the unaffected people of the United States, there just isn’t the drama and emotional content involved with the stupidity of using a cell phone to kill another human being. A jet passenger plane is much more beguiling, and buildings falling down create a much more stunning spectacle than the sight of two cars colliding in an unwarranted accident.

Yes, the parallel to gun control issues is still there. Gun control advocates focus on the spectacular, on the emotional aspects of the issue. They totally ignore the millions of safe, sane and rational uses of guns by honest, law-abiding citizens each year.

Tim Morton  
Shawano, Wisconsin

## XD Fandango

What’s all the singin’ n dancin’ about? The problem is not the definitions, it’s what we are doing with them and what they do for us. Folks were using the DA/DAO terms to get “safer” guns with longer/heavier trigger pulls. That doesn’t work anymore. The XD is as safe or safer with its SA pull as the Glock with its DA pull. Indeed, the Glock’s DA can be as risky as a SA in many hands.

It’s just the same for gamers. They were trying to keep the more “difficult” longer/heavier triggers apart from the “easier” shorter/lighter pulls with those definitions. That doesn’t work anymore either.

The terms do not fall into two groups like they used to. The terms still work as far as defining what the guns are doing, just not what we want the terms to do for us.

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Both the Club Timer 2 and the MKIV Championship Timer are carefully designed with this mission in mind. Both will tell you everything you need to know about most strings at a glance with no button pushing at all. If you do want to review your individual shot times, each will display all the shot info at once (Shot number, split time, total time) so you don’t have to page back and forth in some sort of VCR programming drill. The MKIV goes several steps beyond the Club Timer 2 allowing you to program and simulate advanced courses of fire, includes a full feature chronograph, ballistic computer and lead calculator.



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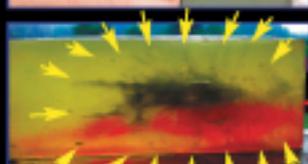


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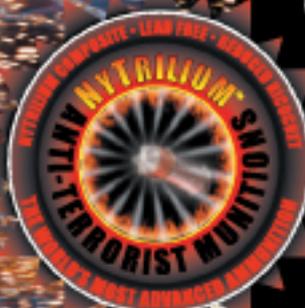
When it hits softer organic targets, it fragments at a slower rate, with larger fragments dissipating into the target creating literally hundreds of wound channels. At night you can see the shock cavity a full seven inches in diameter!

A conventional round can penetrate most human torsos, dissipating a portion of the bullets energy into the target, and wasting the balance traveling into the area behind the target. The composite Explosive Defractor Core™ of the Extreme Shock Explosive Entry AFR Round acts as a perpendicular defractor plate that blows the fragments at virtual 90-degree angles to the wound channel! 100% percent of the energy is transferred into the surrounding tissue mass. This is the reason that the effective E-Shock wound channel is up to (depending on caliber) an astonishing 80 times the size of the entry wound!!



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## SPEAKOUT

Using the NIJ's term "SFA" (striker fired action) won't do either because there are long/heavy/hard and short/light/easy pulls out there too. But, it would allow the XD to play, protect and serve with the Glock, get a few more contracts and even some trophies. Works for me, how about you?

Mike Orick  
MSgt, USAF (Ret)

### More Red America

If there were an "It Needed To Be Said Award" in journalism, Roy Huntington's "Red America" editorial (Jan./Feb. 2003) should take top honors. The self-anointed "intellectuals" so keen to give up freedom for perceived security seem to be in large part to be of the same ilk who shun the idea of personal responsibility for most of this country's social problems. Thomas Jefferson once referred to the "yeoman farmer's" influence on the future of this country. He understood the future of America depended on self-sufficient individuals who could not only supply the nation's needs but defend them from all enemies — both foreign and domestic. Both our coasts seem to have lost this knowledge. Thankfully the Heartland remembers!

Jack Carson  
Noble, Oklahoma

### Blue Strikes Back

As a member of "Blue America," I was insulted and amazed at the ignorance in Huntington's editorial. I was born, grew up and raised a family no more than ten miles from Midtown Manhattan, yet I went to PTA meetings, bought Girl Scout Cookies (from my three Girl Scouts), drive a postal truck, have a gun or fourteen, I take out the trash everyday, my kids have all had pets, played ball, spilled ice cream on the hardwood floors and people like me generally make things run in this country. People in my family have fought, were wounded and died fighting elitism and ideas such as this in Germany, Belgium, Okinawa, Vietnam and even Birmingham.

We get involved with kids, the old and hungry, we pay our teachers what they are worth and even though I don't use a personal organizer I know what it is. And just because I read, appreciate the arts and shop on 5th Ave. doesn't mean I don't know how to build a Chrysler 440, recognize a Bradford pear tree, shoot a gun, run a chainsaw, rebuild a house, grow a garden and raise great children.

Just because you read about a woman from NYC who didn't know her a\*\* from a hole in the ground, don't get the idea we are all like her. Most of us are hard-working Americans with hopes and ideals just like you and if we are going to survive

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## SPEAKOUT

as a nation we are going to have to fight the real enemies of our country not each other. Now if you excuse me, I have to make some sauce, read some Herman Hesse, tweak a Holly carb and my daughter and I are going shooting.

John Valandingham  
Bogota, NJ

*As a member of Red America — stuck living in the Blue section myself — I beg your pardon, John. Now ... “when can we move” is the real question? Editor*

### Country Boy Can Survive

I absolutely loved “The Insider, Red America”, (Jan./Feb.). I live in Indiana and make my living with my hands, as a union really pushes the Democrat party here. They say “Vote your pocket book.” I say vote for the right to protect your family and the right to feed your family by killing the food yourself. I’m young, only 26, but things like gun rights and hunting have got me interested in following the candidates and what they believe in. I do the repairs on my vehicles and home myself. I don’t need an organizer to remember my mom’s birthday or to show up for work. I’m looking into a pistol to carry and picked up your magazine at my local grocery store. I’ll be picking it up again and keeping the country going in Red America by just doing what I do. Thanks for reminding us all. The song “Country Boy Can Survive” by Hank Williams Jr. came to mind.

Matt Eldridge  
Via e-mail

### Smith On-Target

I just finished reading Clint Smith’s “Reality Check” in your March/April issue. I would like to applaud Mr. Smith on his simple but eloquent statements concerning all of the circus-antics many of we “fundamentals-first” trainers see our students bring to class. While we fully understand that learning sound tactical movement and the playing of hide-and-seek games in a class setting are fun and can have merit, this must come only after one has mastered the art of hitting one’s target first, not at the expense of it.

Dean Gamburd  
Total Tactical Training, Inc.

### Barney Fife

The Air Marshall program was created to place men and women with superior skill-at-arms onto commercial airliners to protect the traveling public. With all due respect to Ayoob’s suggestion of allowing all LEOs who travel by air to do so armed, I must ask him, how many of today’s law enforcement officers could perform up to

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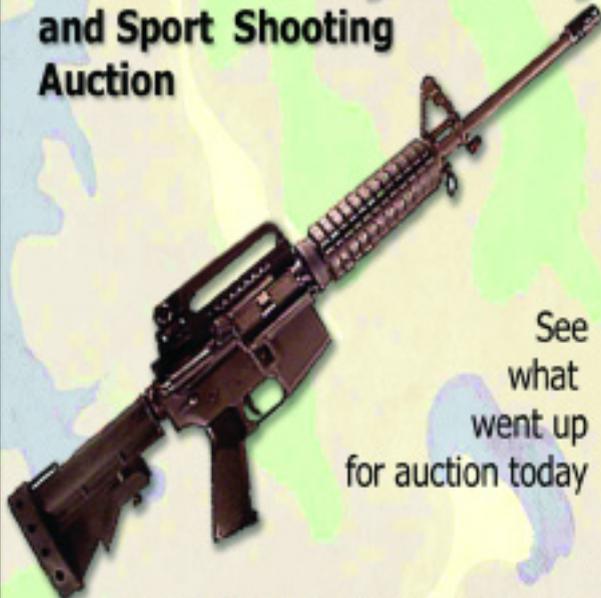
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the minimum requirements of the FAA's Tactical Pistol Qualification Course (<http://communities.prodigy.net/sportsrec/fam-lawman/gz-fam-qual.html>)? My bet is he would agree with me that less than 5% of LEO's would pass the first time.

The measure of putting armed citizens in the air should not be merely the fact one is wearing a badge, but superior skill-at-arms. I'm writing this note to you while traveling from PHX to ATL at 37,000 ft. and I can assure you I would rather be traveling with 120 men and women who have the non-law-enforcement skill of Rob Leatham than with one LEO who shoots like Barney Fife.

Ken Siverts  
Glendale, AZ

## Interview Kicks-Butt

I've been reading gun magazines for over 20 years but this is the first I've felt compelled to write. I have to say, the interview Michael Bane did with author Stephen Hunter was fantastic (Mar./Apr. issue). After I read the article, I bought "Pale Horse Coming" — a great book I simply could not put down. Since then, I've bought two more that quickly captured me. I searched the web and found a site that gives some interesting info on Stephen Hunter, including all the books he has written: [www.stephenhunter.net](http://www.stephenhunter.net), for those inclined to want to know more.

I would like to see your magazine do more quality interviews like this one, and/or periodic book reviews of offerings that may interest your readers. Thanks for opening my eyes to a new author who I enjoy reading immensely.

Don Verba  
Via e-mail

*Don, it might please you to know Stephen proved to be a sterling fellow during our contacts with him, and followed-up the publication of the interview with a thoughtful note of thanks to us — a real gentleman, indeed. Editor*

## Point, Shoot ... Miss?

I read the reader-mail from the "veteran" instructor that, once again, is a shout from the point-shooting pulpit. His comment about telling his student to have "faith" really riled me. I have a video tape of a Georgia deputy who fires 33 rounds at a 50-year old combat vet who shoots and moves with an M1 carbine. The deputy hit the killer once. I'm sure that deputy had "faith" and while you watch the video and get to listen to the deputy's death rattle, you pray "faith" gets him a nice seat at the kid's table in heaven. His "faith" in just pointing and shooting his pistol in a fight — that was

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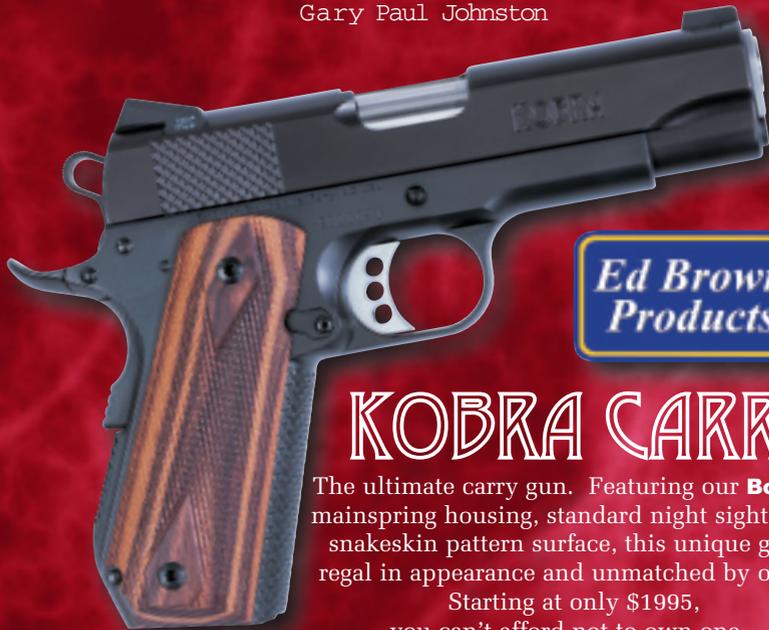
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## SPEAKOUT

at distances of 20 feet to as close as about eight — didn't carry the day and allow him to win.

I'll bet that deputy can tell us firsthand that "just pointing and shooting" doesn't work. Sorry, I just don't like trainers who think the square range is like a fight. To me the square range is to a fight, what college is to real life. Great articles all-around, and kudos to Clint for telling it like it is.

Rick Staples  
Via e-mail

### Vulgar? Who, me?

Keep up the great work with *American Handgunner*, it's a fine publication. However, as I was reading the March/April 2003 issue I was surprised and disappointed at the appearance of vulgar language and explicit references. Naturally, these types of words and expressions are used throughout our society and, although I don't condone their use, I understand people are going to use whatever language they want to express themselves. However, I do exercise control over the type of material that enters my household, particularly that which can be accessed by my young son. Please clean up the language in the magazine. The vulgar language does not add value or credibility to your publication.

Steve Webber  
Lancaster, PA

*Steve, your points are well-taken. The English language can be colorful, descriptive and yes, even offensive in varying degrees, depending upon your own "offense" meter. Your words describing how this language is "used throughout our society" are true and since this magazine is produced by actual human beings who live, work and play in that society, it's only natural a few more colorful words may creep onto our pages at times. Most of our writers and readers are strong-willed, fiercely independent types and as such, are generally not afraid to speak their peace. I feel fortunate to help supply a forum for those often-controversial thoughts. Editor*

### Forum for Handgunners

How about setting up an *American Handgunners* subscribers-forum where we can meet and discuss our unique home-grown martial art, the handgun. Also on the wish list is a compilation of "The Ayooob Files" on CD-ROM. If the rest of the readers are like me, they tend to pass an issue on down the line. I know a person standing twenty-odd feet away with a knife can be a serious threat. Why? I read it in the files. I don't have the issue any-

*Continued on page 109*

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# NRA 2002 LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER OF THE YEAR



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## Patrolman Gary "Kevin" Helms: NRA 2002 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

*"Patrolman Helms possesses the values and qualities that commanders strive to instill in all officers. NRA is honored to recognize him as our Law Enforcement Officer of the Year."* - Ron Kirkland, Director, NRA Law Enforcement Activities Division.

**P**atrolman Gary "Kevin" Helms of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office in Arlington, Tennessee, has been selected as the National Rifle Association's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year for 2002. Patrolman Helms, a 6-year veteran of the Shelby County Sheriff's Office, has played many roles within the department. Patrolman Helms has worked in the civil, community police, street crimes, and fugitive units, and his current assignment, uniform patrol.

Some of Patrolman Helms' achievements include over 300 arrests and 2,000 radio calls. His diligent work has resulted in the seizure of over 28 lbs. of marijuana, 29 ounces of crack and powder cocaine, 13 vehicles, 50 weapons confiscated, and over \$25,000 in cash.

The recommendation to honor Patrolman Helms cites his actions on January 6, 2002. While en route to a vandalism call, Patrolman Helms noticed a vehicle causing a hazard. He stopped to check on the vehicle and asked the driver if he needed assistance. The driver produced a handgun and shot Patrolman Helms in the chest. The bullet was stopped by his body armor and left only a superficial wound. Using his police training, and competitive shooting experience, Patrolman Helms managed to elude the suspect and take cover by his vehicle. Patrolman Helms returned fire, striking the suspect several times. The suspect again shot at Patrolman Helms, striking the police radio clipped to his uniform. The blockage of the bullet by the radio most likely saved his life. At this point, Patrolman Helms was able to radio for assistance.

Among his other activities, Patrolman Helms has also attended gang identification school and street survival school. He was accepted to the Sheriff's Office Pistol Team in September 2000, and since then has won numerous shooting awards and trophies.

In August 2002, Patrolman Helms received two purple star merit awards and a medal of valor. He was also presented with a survivor club award from the Dupont Company, and has been added to the Second Chance Body Armor's Survivor Saves Club. Officer Helms is the 857th officer to escape death or serious injury due to wearing Second Chance Body Armor.

Kevin's dedication to his job and his willingness to go above and beyond the call of duty prove that he is a valuable asset to both the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Shelby County.

The NRA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award was established in 1993 and recognizes exceptional valor, public service, and dedication to the principles of our Constitutional heritage.

All nominations for the 2003 NRA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award must be submitted on the official form and be postmarked by September 1, 2003. Nominations may be submitted by the nominee's agency head or by an NRA member, and must be endorsed by an NRA life member.

To obtain an entry form, or for more information, contact Emma Bailiff, NRA Law Enforcement Activities Division, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax VA 22030, (703) 267-1649, or e-mail [lead@nrahq.org](mailto:lead@nrahq.org).



J.D. Jones

## .500 S&W MAGNUM

**I**t's finally come to pass — a true biggie in the revolver business is chambering a .50 of their own design. Of course, this isn't a new thing for S & W, as they teamed with Remington for the .44 and .41 Magnums in the days of yore. In this case the ammo teaming was done with Cor-Bon.

Rumors of S & W's interest in a .50 started shortly after last year's SHOT show and things went quickly after that.

### BIG IS BETTER

**T**he Remington 1868 Rolling block Navy model .50 caliber pistol was the first .50 cal cartridge pistol.

With about 25 grains of black powder and a 300 grain lead bullet, it was considered a helluva' manstopper in its day. It worked so well, as a matter of fact, ammo continued to be produced by Remington and WW into the 1920s. Of course the six shot 1873 Colt SAA and its competitors signaled the death knell of the single shot individual personal protection kinetic energy system. A few Springfield trapdoor rifles in 45-70 and 50-70 were converted to pistols over the years and then interest waned. WW II took up a lot of time and resources and the next real innovation was the 44 Magnum.

Very little was done in .50 caliber pistols until the Contender started being customized. Lee Jurras used the basic .500 Nitro case for his .50 Howdah and I chose the standard .50-70 case for SSK Contenders. Both worked reasonably well and probably created a bit of interest in .50 caliber by other custom gunsmiths. SSK had also made some really powerful .50s on XP-100s.

The next real attempt to market a .50 was by a company called HWP, who had cases made with correct headstamps. The case was derived from the .348 Winchester opened to 50 — AKA .50 Alaskan — and radically shortened. I made several Contender test barrels

for them and I retained the first experimental barrel for myself. HWP's idea was to convert Dan Wesson revolvers to .50 and I understand a few were actually made up. Then I lost track of them.

As I recall, sometime later the .500 Magnum — later changed to .50 Linebaugh — surfaced, and began to be successful and was also made by several other custom gunsmiths. Visually I can't tell the two apart without looking at the headstamp. Obviously, this success and resulting publicity inspired the .50 AE in Magnum Research Desert Eagle. Further revolver work was done with longer .50 caliber cases on the Ruger Maximum frame and similar setups. In my experience with .50 caliber revolvers, the Double action Ruger conversion by Bowen has been by far the most pleasant to shoot. A well designed DA revolver style and grip in my opinion handles recoil far better than a SA style.



*.50 Cal. Remington  
1868 Navy Rolling Block*



*From left to right: .50 BMG, .500 S&W  
Mag., .475/500 JDJ, .458/500 JDJ.*

### A 325 at 2,000 fps!

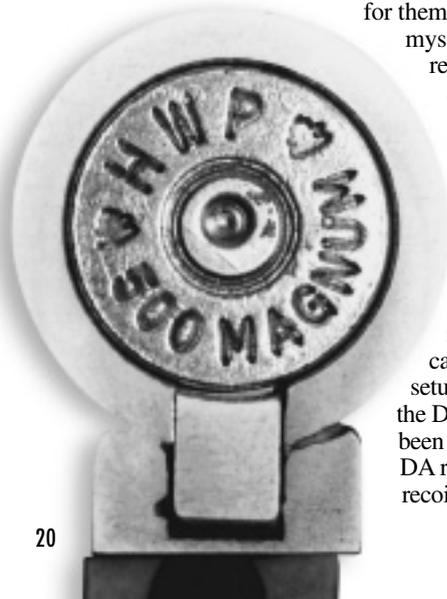
**S**SK and others have made extremely powerful single shot .50s on the XP receiver, and the introduction of the Encore made it possible to chamber several very powerful ones, such as the .50 Alaskan in that excellent pistol. The Encore, with correct rubber grips and brake, handles extreme recoil very well.

Since SSK makes various pressure barrels for the industry, Cor-Bon selected SSK to make-up the first pressure barrels for the .500 S & W Magnum. Later, a different configuration pressure barrel was fabricated to fit S & W's pressure measuring system. In the meantime, I've had a good bit of shooting experience with the .500 S & W Magnum in a 10" plus barreled SSK Encore. Basically, it will easily do about 2,000 fps with Speer 300 and 325 gr. bullets. At this velocity the 325 Speer HP creates quite devastating wounds, as you might imagine.

As far as I know now the bullet selection will start with the 275 grain Barnes and end with a 440 grain cast bullet. We have a lot to learn about it and also the .475/500 and .458/500 JDJ Woodswalker cartridges, which are now in the initial shooting stages at SSK — where, by the way, .500 S & W barrels are now available. I expect the .500 S & W Magnum will be relatively easy to shoot and quite successful both in the marketplace and in the field.



*Editor's Note: Read the Insider for more details on the .500 S&W Magnum.*



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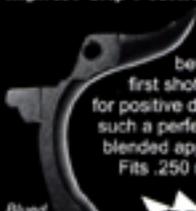
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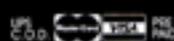
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## WHAT YOU SAID ISN'T WHAT I HEARD

**W**hat we say may not be what the other guy hears. Sometimes the wrong communication can start something we wanted to avoid.

Thirty years as an instructor has taught me communication is a three-step process. First there is "Message sent." Then a "Message received." Finally there's the often-missed third step: "Confirmation that message has been correctly received."

I was reminded of this by a failure on my own part in the third step recently, and since it occurred in the pages of



*American Handgunner*, it ought to be corrected here. I recently wrote a feature story on the Springfield XD pistol. Part of the story revolved around the decision of the I.D.P.A. to put this gun in the Enhanced Service Pistol category for single action guns. My feeling was that since its shooting and trigger pull characteristics most resembled those of a Glock, it should be in the Stock Service Pistol class along with the Glock.

I had quoted from memory a comment IDPA board member Walt Rauch had made to me when we discussed the topic. Walt had said the fact the gun's manufacturer had described it on the maker's European-based web-site as single action confirmed IDPA's decision. In the article, I referred to it having been "advertised" on the site. Walt feels that my words unfairly characterized the decision: he believes that a manufacturer's specifications published on a web-site are not merely "advertising," which the public expects to be laced with frivolous claims, but constitute the equivalent of a catalog, which is more in the line of documentation.

I've always seen a web-site as more advertising than documentation, and that personal view apparently colored my view of Walt's words. For this, I herewith apologize.

A lot of miscommunications have far more serious effects, and that bears some discussion.

## Body Language Miscues

**A**n Anglo cop is giving a stern lecture to someone he's about to let off with a warning instead of arrest. But the suspect, a Hispanic, is looking at the ground as the officer speaks. The cop reads this body language as an insult. The lawman barks, "Hey, buddy, I'm talkin' to you," and soon a confrontation escalates. This is because no one told the Anglo cop that in Hispanic cultures, casting of the eyes downward is a sign of deferential respect.

A hard-bitten old detective arrives at the scene where a rookie officer has had to shoot a violent criminal. As the older cop interviews the younger, the latter has difficulty making eye contact, and seems to be uncomfortable in a close space with the questioner. The senior officer's "I'm being lied-to" alert goes off, because he was taught at interrogation school these were body language signals of deceit. The investigation is now going down a trail that leads away from the truth instead of toward it, for one simple reason. The senior cop was never taught the victim of a recent near-death experience — such as a cop who has just had to shoot an armed attacker or be killed by him — will often have the body language of a victim. This almost exactly mimics what many have been taught is the body language of deceit.

## WHEN WORDS ARE TAKEN WRONG

**T**he story is told of a SWAT call-out years ago where it looked as if the suspect was about to open fire. A commander snapped to a police sniper, "Take him!" The sniper's rifle spoke immediately, dropping its target. When a lawsuit subsequent to the shooting got too hot for the man who had given the order to fire, the commander said, "I said 'Take him,' not 'shoot him'!" One wonders what other meaning the commander could have possibly had in mind under the circumstances. In any case, prevention of such "weasel-wording" is one reason police precision riflemen now use more specific and by-the-book commands when the situation indicates that deadly force must be employed.

The "gunfight at OK Corral" was doubtless the most controversial and the most widely studied officer-involved shooting in 19th Century law enforcement. There are many different versions in print, but most agree that some interesting verbiage immediately preceded the shooting.

Virgil Earp, chief of police of Tombstone, was the man in charge and the one who did the talking when the lawmen and Doc Holliday faced the cowboys in the alley in question. Virgil Earp reportedly told the cowboys, "Put up your arms." The meaning, of course, was to raise their hands.

Instead, the Earps said later, at least one of the Clinton/McLaury faction made a move as if toward a gun. He was about to put up an entirely different type of "arm." Witnesses said that Virgil Earp then blurted something like, "I don't mean that!" But if he had anything else to add, the gunfire drowned him out.



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# REALITYCHECK

Clint Smith

**FIRST-PERSON  
THOUGHTS ON  
SURVIVING IN  
THE REAL WORLD**



**Tougher than a tree knot — Ms. Kimberly did well with a full Presentation Grade Les Baer Thunder Ranch Special in .45 caliber.**

## It's Only Your Life

**I**n the month of May we completed a Ladies Defensive Handgun Course at Thunder Ranch and, as always, I learned some new things and reaffirmed some things I'd seen before. In all honesty, I've seen the same things for many years but wanted to confirm it one more time before I wrote this.

As is the case with such things, there are always two sides to most stories. This story has the man's view — and the women's view. First off, as best as I can recall, when marriage vows are exchanged the parties declare in public to do things together and to support one another and to be there until the inevitable death that accompanies life with distressing regularity. Over the years I have seen and heard a lot of peculiar things considering the marriage vows we agreed upon.

### Women:

- "It's his place to protect me ... that's a man's job."
- "Nothing has ever happened to us, besides I don't like guns."
- "I don't like guns around the house ... we have kids."

### Men:

- "She doesn't like guns ... I took her to the range once and she didn't like shooting my .44 Magnum."
- "Yeah, I gave her my old gun when I bought my new one."
- "She doesn't really need a good gun — she doesn't shoot much anyway."



## HAND-ME-DOWNS

**F**or the man of the family there is a point of interest here. Most men cannot teach their wives how to shoot. In many cases, short tempers and impatience have ruined the potential to create new women shooters. In short, men can be assholes in this department. The really sad part is this ruins the possibility of having man's best potential partner available to him in a life or death conflict — his wife.

Being smooth, like you were when you were dating, how about a bouquet of flowers and a dinner out as an introduction to the, "Oh by the way, what do you think about going to the range and shooting a little? You don't have to be like a SWAT guy or in the Army or anything like that when we go. Just consider learning the mechanics and some basic marksmanship. Please?" You smooth devil you. If you can have her get basic skills as part of a class or with other like-gender shooters it sometimes smooths the way.

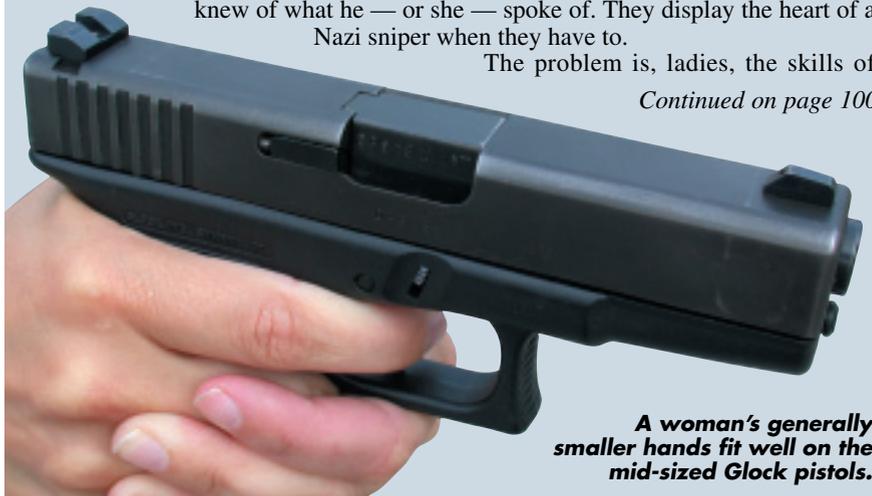
Next point: Do you really think it's a good idea to give your wife your hand-me-down handgun? I've often heard "I got this gun from my husband when he got his new one." Men, let's get this straight. You are going to take a handgun you don't really want and pass it down to your partner? Not to overstate the case, and not every hand me down handgun is a bad one, but most I've seen wouldn't be my first choice for my wife — or even yours.

## Puppies Are Cute — Not Guns

**F**or the women, it is a bold assumption that you presume to be above getting your hands dirty by defending your husband, children and yourself. Women, by what I know of them by nature, nurture, grow and care for things. The thought of taking a life is generally against the grain of the gender. However, whoever said "Hell hath no fury like a woman defending her children or family" knew of what he — or she — spoke of. They display the heart of a Nazi sniper when they have to.

The problem is, ladies, the skills of

*Continued on page 100*



**A woman's generally smaller hands fit well on the mid-sized Glock pistols.**

# World Famous Street-Fighter Will Give You A **FREE GUN...**

**Just To Prove He Can Take It Away From You Bare-Handed  
As Easy As Candy From A Baby!**

Dear Friend,

I want to send you a free gun. (It is identical in CAD-imaged specs to the standard military-issue "Red style" training gun.)

There are 2 things I want you to do when you receive it:

- (1) I want you to set the gun aside, and watch the four videos I will also send.
- (2) Then, I want you to give the gun to the toughest, biggest and most coordinated friend you have... and ask him to:

### **Point The Gun At You And Squeeze The Trigger!**

It is important that you choose someone who is larger than you. Preferably, he should also have some skill at fighting. *A black belt karate master would be perfect.*

Why am I asking you to do this? Because, I want to **prove** to you that what you see on these video tapes will allow you to instantly take that gun away (bare-handed) and *put him down on the ground* before he can move a muscle to squeeze the trigger! And once down, you will be able to **keep** him on the floor. You'll be in complete control.

As you will see in these tapes, you do not need strength, or special agility, or even previous skill in fighting. You will see how even a small man (5' 5", 140 pounds soaking wet) can easily disarm and take down a bodybuilder (6' 2", 240 pounds) trained in judo!

It's an astonishing fact to learn, but it is true nevertheless. What you are about to learn are the **identical** "Disarm and Disable" tactics used by elite U.S. military personnel, big city SWAT teams, and high-profile security enforcement...

### **Which Have Been Kept Secret From Civilians (Like You) For Almost 20 Years!**

Now, let me tell you about this gun. It is a detailed and exact replica of the "Red style" guns used by the military for training. It was designed and hand casted so that *all the tolerances are identical*. It has the feel, heft and balance of an authentic high-powered automatic pistol, yet is crafted from special solid polymers so it can be used for real-life training.

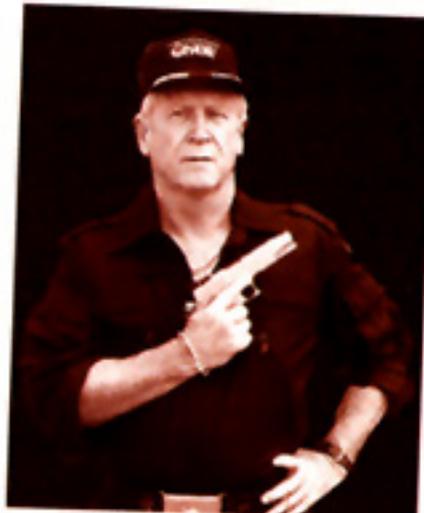
This gun would fool an expert who picked it up blindfolded — *only* the solid bore and the color (yellow) give it away as a training weapon. (The color is used for two reasons: To avoid misunderstandings with people who do not realize it is a training gun, and to keep you from accidentally picking up a real gun to practice with.)

There is one important alteration to this training gun. The **trigger guard** has been strategically changed so it will not snap the finger off your training partner, as a normal

trigger guard would. This alteration allows you to train without "pulling punches", and speeds up your learning curve dramatically.

*Now*, don't get the idea the "moves" you are about to learn are difficult, just because they have been held in secret by some of the most feared fighters in the world. *The moves are simple and natural...* yet utterly devastating when used against an armed attacker. You will be able to quickly take away your assailant's gun, **and you will also learn:**

- The *most important* (and *toughest*) decision you **must** make in any armed confrontation... and how to make it intelligently and morally (so you never have to second-guess yourself later!)
  - Why the *incorrect* disarming techniques will actually **force your attacker to fire...** whether he's decided to or not!
  - Why a man with a gun standing just 2 feet away from you is at a disadvantage... and how to use simple "leverage" to make him regret it forever!
  - Why the correct way to "clear" a weapon increases your chances of **not getting shot** (first rule of bare-handed gun fighting) by 60%!
- What's more, you'll also learn how to disarm an attacker who has a knife... along with:
- How to tell when your attacker is just "bluffing" with a knife... and when



*"The release of these  
tapes is unparalleled  
...it may save your life."*

Colonel Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.)  
Founder and publisher of  
Soldier of Fortune Magazine.

he's about to commit to stabbing you! (Crucial knowledge for making your best fight-ending move!)

- The *single most important decision* you must come to terms with in a knife fight!
- How to protect your most vulnerable "targets" during a knife fight... and how to use these rapid-blood loss areas **against your assailant to end the fight instantly!**

*Plus*, you'll learn the tactics of taking away a club or baseball bat from an attacker... and also:

- How to tell where the "sweet spot" of a club or baton is... where all the *damaging power* is located! (And how to avoid it!)
- Where the "safety" area of the club is: the 20% of any swing where the power of the club is wasted (and where your opportunity to *end the fight* lies!)

And, once you've disarmed your attacker and are facing him bare-handed... well, that's just child's play now. These tapes will show you:

- How to use the secret of your body's natural "fulcrums" to bring anyone to their knees... using only 12 pounds of pressure and a tiny "torque" of your wrist! (Once you understand the secret, even a fighter twice your size can be dropped in a blink... with no more exertion on your part than you'd use to open a tin can!)
- How to master the strongest grip you're capable of — no matter how "weak" you think you are!
- The devastating secrets of *joint manipulation* (the lazy man's method of effective fighting!)
- The 4 crucial moves you must make when being "held up" from behind! (Or being forced to kneel from behind... one of the more *common* assault techniques used by desperate criminals and hostage takers!)

**PLUS** — and this is *my favorite* part of the package — you get an entire video of street-fighting "Dirty Tricks"... the same sneaky moves used by professional soldiers and cops who can't afford to waste time fighting by the old "rules of the street". You'll learn:

- The 2 psychological responses *all* top warriors "surrender" to the instant a fight is at hand... that *increases their chance of survival and victory by 400%!*
- How to quickly "cancel out" any size or weight advantages your opponent has!
- The secrets of "Single Finger" takedowns... using moves that are **indefensible even by a larger and**

### more experienced opponent!

- How to use "pain enhancement" tech to convince your assailant to stay down until the cops arrive!
- **How just 6 pounds of pressure on a nerve can set you free from almost any hold!**
- How to break away from strong-arm choke holds!
- **The natural "guides" on your attacker's body that automatically guarantee a correct strike!**
- The 12 take-down tricks that are never taught in karate "schools"!
- **How to avoid the horrible mistake most fighters make with groin kicks!**
- **How rookie fighters "telegraph" their moves... and not to do it yourself (and use your knowledge to gain advantages over your dumber attackers)!**
- How to reverse the worst fighting position you could ever find yourself in!
- **Your 5 best "first strikes" to end any fight instantly — a split second before it begins!**
- The sneaky ways professional fighters use the element of surprise to turn around dangerous situations... even when they're the ones who've been "jumped" by an assailant unexpectedly!
- **The simplest way to gain a "technical" advantage when you appear to be overmatched!**

And more. A lot more, in fact. For example... **How only 4-6 pounds of pressure can snap a shinbone... How to "adjust" his attitude without doing obvious harm... A detailed "map" of anatomical targets (for example: where the thumb ends at the thigh is a crucial nerve point — reaction: numbing shock when kicked)... And, the most decisive move you can make to end any fight instantly!**

As you can see, the secrets revealed in these amazing video tapes will give you a powerful new way of moving in the world, because...

### **You Will Never Again Walk Your Streets In Fear!**

Are you having trouble believing all this? That's okay — I'm used to people being suspicious... *at first*. But the truth is, what you are about to learn is praised by professional soldiers, and law enforcement personnel all over the country. They *all* agree that this new system can be learned quickly and easily, and will work on the street under even the worst conditions imaginable.

**Here is how we came to discover these "professional warrior" bare-handed fighting secrets:** For a long time now, I have been connected to the "inside" of certain elite military and law enforcement circles. (Including the Navy SEALs and US Army DELTA soldiers — the most dangerous soldiers on the planet.) My goal is to help civilians like you to understand the super-effective fighting skills that have been developed. I want my family to feel as safe and protected as possible, and I'm sure you want the same for your loved ones.

Anyway, through certain inside "contacts" (which I am **not** going to tell you about) I was approached by two of the most respected professional combat trainers in the world: **Randy Wanner** is a feared martial arts expert who for years has been training federal and state law enforcement agencies in "street survival fighting tactics". (He was also the former Martial Arts editor for *Soldier of Fortune* magazine.) His name is well-known among the elite "warriors" of modern-day combat, and he has gone toe-to-toe with street fighters from all over the world to prove his techniques are superior to anything else out there.

**Bob Taylor** is considered one of the country's most experienced experts in close quarters combat. State, local and federal law enforcement agencies use him frequently for training. He is also a specialist in counter-terrorism for African, South American and Central American governments.

These two guys are in demand all over the world. Their clients include the U.S. military, big-city SWAT teams, international anti-terrorist squads and top security firms in 15 foreign countries. These clients hire Bob and Randy for just one thing:

### **Their Incredible Skill In Quickly Teaching Their Unique "Bare-Handed" Disarming and Disabling Techniques For Armed Attackers!**

This new fighting system took over 20 years to develop. It was necessary because soldiers and officers who were supposed to be disarming their attackers were, instead, *getting shot and disabled themselves!*

Randy and Bob decided to find out what was wrong. They used their connections within the military establishment to get "training" bullets for their weapons. These bullets (called "Red Jets") are almost impossible for civilians to get. They are made of wax and polymer, yet are calibrated to fire from real weapons and can blow a hole in quarter-inch plywood from 15 feet. These training bullets were necessary for Bob and Randy's research, because...

### **They Used This Live Ammunition On Each Other To Develop Their New Disarming System!**

Let me tell you — it takes some kind of guts to face a gun loaded with live ammo. Those wax bullets travel at *over 400 feet per second...* and even if they don't tear up your body like real bullets, these guys have the scars to prove getting hit with them isn't pretty. *No one else in the world has ever done this kind of live-weapon research!*

The first thing they found out, of course, was that 99% of the disarming tactics being used by soldiers and cops (and still being taught by smug karate masters who have never had to face a loaded gun in person) **DO NOT WORK!**

This has to stop. It's irresponsible. It's stupid — especially when Randy and Bob have, after 20 years of tough research, come up with simple and easy-to-learn ways that **do** work!

Their discoveries have revolutionized the way modern professional warriors approach armed attackers — already, there are cops who are on record saying these new skills have

saved their lives in the street!

**Why do you — as a civilian — need these skills?** Are you kidding? The whole world has gone psycho. The odds that you will be faced by an armed attacker — without a weapon of your own to rely on — are getting worse every day. This kind of advanced knowledge (even if it is easy to learn) isn't a luxury for American men anymore. The facts are staggering:

- M.I.T. (the famous university) did a study uncovering the fact that **5 of every 6 twelve-year-old kids are going to be the victim of a violent crime in their lives!** That's almost *everybody*, sooner or later!
- Jean O'Neil (of the **Nat. Crime Prevention Council**) says that victims who are forced into an attacker's car *rarely* walk away alive!
- And every kind of horrible crime is becoming more and more common — you are no longer safe in your home, in your car, in a restaurant, or on the street surrounded by other people!

What's more, new studies show that women who *fight back* are less likely to be raped. And that learning some form of self-defense is your *best bet* against a criminal population who is prepared to use force and violence on a whim.

**But there's a BIG problem here.** The way most Americans are going about getting prepared to defend themselves is simply...

### **Not Going To Work!**

Here are the facts, my friend: Most martial art studios are run by people who have *never been in a real fight before in their lives...* and you will probably be trained (in a *huge* class) by people who have been prematurely promoted to "black belt" just to handle the classes! These "store front" studios operate exactly like health spas — they lure in large numbers of people, and get the money up front. It's a business.

And the garbage being sold to women offers only the pale illusion of self-defense: Tear gas, stun guns and the fancy alarm sirens people are "arming" themselves with are worthless in most cases of attack.

**In reality, you have only two choices:** Remain a vulnerable "potential victim" who trusts that God will protect you... or learn the **RIGHT** way to defend yourself.

It's not hard to do. In fact, it's relatively *simple*...

### **Once You Understand The "Inside" Secrets!**

Well, there's a "hitch". You see, the only way to even get any personal training from Bob or Randy was to get into their heavily-monitored seminars. But to get in, you need **2 forms of official credentials and licenses** (plus about **\$850** for the full board of instruction). Only professionals — elite soldiers, police SWAT teams, high-profile security agents — have been allowed to learn this life-saving stuff...

### **Until Now!**

Why now? Because, after about a year of intense negotiation, we convinced Bob and Randy to go into a video studio and — taking as long as they needed — produce the **first video package ever** of their most trustworthy tech-

niques for facing an armed attacker bare-handed.

And they did just that. After weeks of filming and editing, they created the only package in existence for people (like you) outside the world of professional warriors. **Yet they pulled no punches in presenting their new fighting system!** What you get here is all their best techniques, best advice, and best training methods!

**Here's what you get in this amazing, just-released video package:**

- **4 full-length videos** (almost 5 solid hours) — teaching you all the advanced combat techniques for instantly disarming and disabling (bare-handed) any assailant coming at you with a gun, club or knife (the most common weapons you'll see on the streets!)
- Included is the famous **"Dirty Tricks"** video of Bob and Randy's favorite moves — really sneaky ways to manipulate and "put down" any attacker before he knows what happened... and keep him down until help arrives or you decide an "alternative" course of action! Even trained street fighters *twice your size* will go down fast — and stay down — with these astonishing fighting secrets!
- Plus, you get your specially-made **"replica" gun...** yours FREE just for ordering the video tapes.

The techniques you will discover on these tapes are the *identical* ones taught to elite soldiers, SWAT team cops and high-security personnel...

#### With One Important Difference!

In these videos, you get the incredible advantage of seeing everything via **3 separate cameras** (mounted stage left, right, and overhead)...so you get *multi-angles* and *slow-motion repetitions* of each and every move! This means you get an increased understanding... and you'll follow a faster "learning curve" than even the professionals get during a seminar!

This is no Hollywood B.S... these are real techniques used by cops and soldiers! **And make no mistake** — this stuff should *only* be used when you are faced with what the professionals call **"Condition Red"**: The point where you have **absolutely** decided that your assailant has already made the choice to harm you... *and you must act to save your life!*

That's what this tape package is all about. You, ultimately, have to take responsibility for yourself, and for your actions. We can't do that for you. Neither can we guarantee that what you learn here will make you invulnerable to harm — that would be a stupid claim, and you would be a fool to believe it. No, what you have here is an **OPTION**. You are giving yourself one more (powerful) choice in this crazed, dangerous world — the choice to not be a vulnerable victim who has no idea what to do... even though you know that certain harm is imminent!

I don't rob people. I don't like to hurt anyone, and I don't like to see other people get hurt. It sickens me that the criminal element has taken over our streets, and is invading homes with impunity. That sucks — and I, for one, am damned glad to have tools like these

to take back my little piece of the world.

And I believe you feel the same way. That's why I want you to see these tapes for yourself. Right now.

**Here's the deal:** All you need to do is call my office at **1-800-899-8153** and ask for **Department FC-53** (that's a toll-FREE call and won't cost you a cent) and tell the person who answers that you want the **"Fighting Chance"** video package... along with your free replica gun. Have your credit card ready. Or, if you prefer to pay by check or money order, simply fill out the "Priority Order Form" below and mail it with your payment to:

TRS

**606 E. Acequia Ave., Dept. FC-53  
Visalia, CA 93292**

The cost of this incredible package is just \$97 — that includes everything *and* you have a...

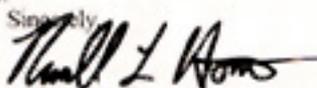
#### Full 3 Month Risk-Free Money-Back Guarantee!

If you aren't satisfied with this package — for any reason at all — just send it back and I will rush your refund back by return mail. I trust your judgment here.

And, you get to **KEEP** the gun, even if you decide to return the videos! Consider it a gift, just for giving these astonishing tapes a "trial run".

**But you do need to hurry!** Even though we have many allies in the military and law enforcement "brotherhood" who support our attempts to "de-victimize" civilians, you should know there are many others who are scared to death with the idea of giving these secrets away. We have already been "stopped" by the U.S. Navy for offering another product... and the truth is, there are no guarantees this product won't be "stopped" also.

If that happens, you won't be able to get this information at any cost, anywhere. So, you see, it's very important that you order **now**, while you have this letter in your hands... and don't risk having these tapes withheld from you!

Sincerely,  


Dr. R.L. Horne

P.S. One last thing — it's important. Please read these "testimonials" now.

## Here's What Professional Military and Law Enforcement People Are Saying...

*"In my 50 years of military combat experience no one has done the hands-on research of being unarmed against a live weapon... until now! Study and master this tape. It will save your life."*

— Major General John K. Singlaub, USA (Ret.)

*"...The joint breaking techniques on this tape alone are perhaps the most powerful fighting tools you could have on your side."*

— Phillip Morrison, demolition/anti-terrorist/crowd control expert, Director of Uniformed K-9 division.

*"These guys have 'broken the code' on making these frighteningly-effective skills very simple to learn and easy to use under adverse conditions in the street."*

— Jim Stalnaker, 26 years with the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department, (homicide, SWAT team leader), now teaching advanced "high risk" skills to U.S. military, federal, state and local agencies.

*"I can testify to the saving of two officers whose lives were saved because of (Randy and Bob's disarmament techniques)."*

— Bog Dugan, President, Executive Security International, LTD. (Aspen, CO)

*"The knowledge in these four videos could save your life."*

— Neil C. Livingstone, author and expert on terrorism and national security.

*"...Without a doubt this is the most viable and practical system of weapons disarmament in existence."*

— Colonel Fred Caristo, USA (Ret.)

*"...It is my opinion that every active-duty law enforcement officer should have access to this video series. These videos will save lives!"*

— Dave Chatellier, CEO of "A Place To Shoot", 20 years active military service, 13 years Civilian Special Operational Services.

## "Fighting Chance" Priority Order Form

For Fastest Service Use Your Credit Card and Call TOLL-FREE

**1-800-899-8153** (Ask for Dept. FC-53)

**YES!** I'm ready to take responsibility for my own self-defense in this increasingly-dangerous world! Please rush me the "Fighting Chance" video package... including my FREE training gun! I understand I have a complete 100% Money Back Guarantee: If I'm not satisfied for any reason, all I need to do is send the tapes back and I'll be rushed every penny of my purchase price, no questions asked! And I get to KEEP the training gun just for giving this astonishing package a "trial run". Now that's generous! **Here's how I want to pay:**

I prefer to pay by credit card. Please charge my:  
 Visa  MasterCard  AmEx  Discover

Enclosed is my check or money order payable to TRS for \$102 (\$97 + \$5 S&H).

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CA residents add appropriate sales tax. Rush shipping available for an additional \$10 for "2-Day" and \$15 for "Overnight".

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# BETTER SHOOTING

Dave Anderson

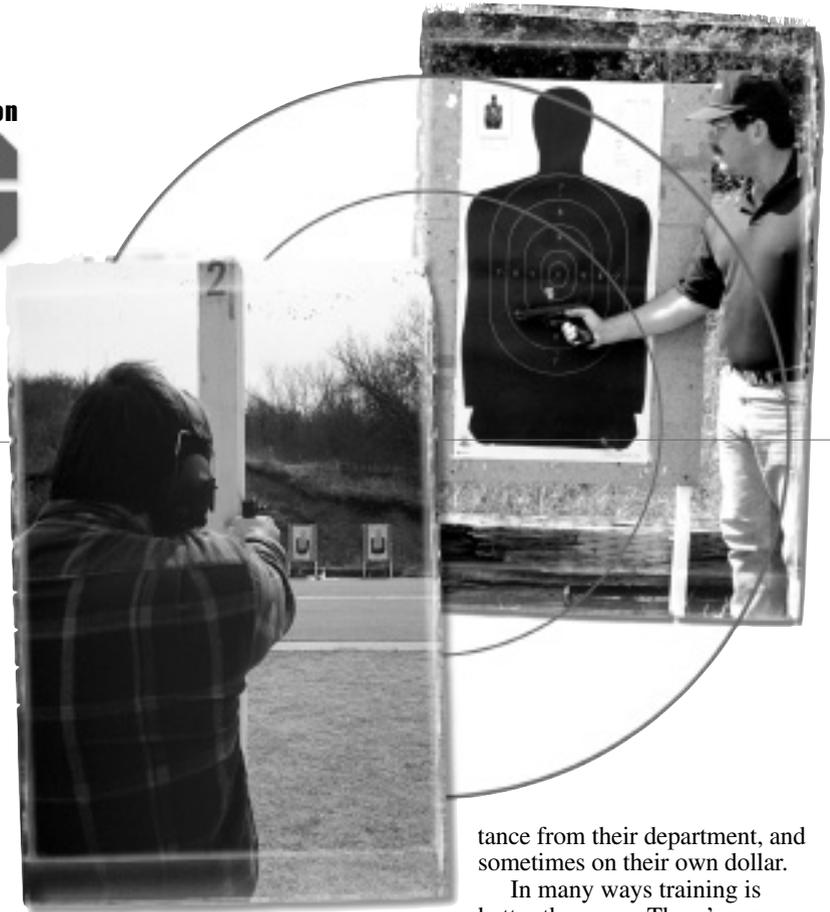
## SIMPLY BAD SHOTS

Askins perhaps said it best: "...the average police officer is an abominably poor marksman, knows he is, yet doesn't care, will spend neither his time nor his money to improve his skill, has no interest whatsoever in his service pistol, and yearly pays with his life...for this alarming disregard of basic fundamentals." (The Pistol Shooters Book, by Col. Charles Askins).

That was said 50 years ago. When Askins joined the Border Patrol in 1930 few departments offered any training at all. Fortunately great improvements in firearms training have been made. Starting about the mid-'30s, more and more cities began providing ranges, training and regular qualification requirements for their officers. At the federal level the Border Patrol and the FBI set the trend in firearms training.

Today no department or agency, large or small, would dream of putting officers on duty without adequate training and qualification. Additionally we have highly regarded private training centers like Thunder Ranch, Gunsite and the Lethal Force Institute. Manufacturers of police equipment (S&W, HK, Glock, Surefire, SIGARMS, and others) also have academies providing excellent instruction.

Today peace officers take the responsibility that goes with carrying a weapon very seriously. Many augment their basic training with additional practice, on their own time and at their own expense. They take advanced training — sometimes with assis-



tance from their department, and sometimes on their own dollar.

In many ways training is better than ever. There's more emphasis on realistic defensive training, and interactive systems such as FATS (Firearm Action Training System) and LaserShot help prepare officers to make crucial shoot/don't shoot decisions.

Unfortunately, due to time and budget constraints something had to be sacrificed to make way for new programs. Many times what is sacrificed is training in precision marksmanship. Fifty-yard qualification is largely a thing of the past and many programs place little emphasis on even 25-yard shooting.

One ostensible reason is many service autopistols lack the accuracy of the revolvers they replaced. That's hogwash. But I've also had instructors tell me their departments were delighted to drop precision marksmanship training since it reduced training time and costs and made qualification easier.

## Foolish Fusillades?

Recently, I got into a discussion with some friends about an incident where a man had been shot and killed by police. No one questioned the use of deadly force. The suspect had just killed a police dog and was pointing a gun at officers.

But they couldn't understand why so many shots had been fired. Three officers fired a total of twenty rounds — 19 shots missed. The range was perhaps 20 yards.

My belief is society has a substantial reservoir of support for police, sympathy for the dangerous aspects of the occupation and even a willingness to give police the benefit of the doubt in difficult circumstances. Situations in which a fusillade of shots is fired have the potential to undermine this support.

## MARKSMANSHIP WINS

The general public knows little about how hard it is to shoot under great stress. They read of twenty shots fired and imagine a two-minute firefight — not realizing the three officers probably fired those shots in maybe two or three seconds. Such incidents may make police look incompetent, wildly spraying bullets and endangering bystanders. Or else they may appear callous, remorselessly cutting down the suspect.

Why so many shots and so many misses? In my opinion it was quite simple: the officers were doing the best they could. Indexing the gun and releasing the trigger smoothly, under the tremendous stress of knowing your own life is in extreme danger, is not easy. They just couldn't make the shot. What that

tells me is their training needs improvement. As the saying goes, "In an emergency we do not rise to the occasion. We default to our level of training."

Precision marksmanship training develops important skills. It requires development of a stable shooting stance and hold, to keep the gun still. It teaches sight alignment and trigger control. Most importantly, it builds confidence. By all means keep the newer methods of instruction, but let's not abandon the basics.

Building defensive skills is like building a house. The foundation should be the ability to make an accurate shot on demand. Right now I think we have some fancy houses with shaky foundations.





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- Larry Connelley, Owner



"KnifeArt.com is well-represented by the nation's top makers. The incredible selection, especially in the realm of tacticals, is certainly one of the best on the 'Net.'"

- Pat Covert, American Handgunner  
March/April 2002

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# The AYOOB FILES

## LEAD AND DIAMONDS: THE RICHMOND JEWELRY STORE SHOOTOUT

**Situation:** Two particularly brutal and heavily armed criminals hit an upscale jewelry store — and meet a firestorm of armed citizen resistance.

**Lesson:** Sound planning beats seasoned perpetrators. Sometimes, the more firepower you have, the better. The best cops in the world can't help you if they aren't right there, right now.

---

December 2, 1994. William "Pappy" Head, 71, and Thomas Jefferson Salter, 56, are what today's young predators would call "OGs" — "Old Gangsters." Pappy is a known hit man, on parole after serving only a year of a five year sentence for conspiracy to commit murder, and both have a long history of robbing banks and jewelry stores. Salter has told his son he does it for the adrenaline rush. Both are members of a loose-knit gang of all-white robbers, killers and dope-runners known in the deep South as the Dixie Mafia.

Their target is Beverly Hills Jewelers, an upscale shop within sight of the Henrico County Police Department and the local FBI office on the outskirts of Richmond, Virginia. The store has already been cased for them the previous September by crooked carnival workers tied to the Dixie Mafia, when they were in town for a fair. It looks fat and easy. Pappy unlimbers his double-barrel, 12 gauge sawed-off shotgun and Tom draws one of the two handguns tucked in his belt, a 1911 .45 auto. They roll ski masks down over their faces and burst through the door.

They don't know that when they emerge, they'll be wearing body bags instead of ski masks.

### Preparation

In his mid-forties, married with four kids, storeowner Gary Baker was not a man who took chances. This was why he had situated his jewelry store in one of the lower crime suburbs of the area, the Wistar Mall on Staples Mills Road. The interior had the show-cases laid out in a squared-off horseshoe pattern, reasonably well secured from unauthorized entry behind the counters. At the back of the store, the office area was elevated, offering a view of the store proper but shielded by an invisible steel-walled partition that Baker has designed himself.

A shooter since boyhood, Baker always snorted at police handouts that told merchants to surrender to armed robbers and put themselves at their mercy rather than resist. Not long before, it became apparent that an anti-gun governor was going to ramrod through a "one gun a month" law in Virginia. It seemed like a good idea to stock up. Baker had purchased eleven Rossi .38 Specials, five-shot snubbies, and laid them out at ten foot intervals behind the counters, invisible to the public but readily accessible to staff. All were loaded with Remington 125 grain semi-jacketed hollow points. He wanted simple "point and shoot" guns that all worked the same, and could be easily deployed under stress. In addition, he secreted his own Remington 870 12 gauge pump gun where he could reach it near the door to his office. Under one back counter, as incongruous among the little matte blue .38s as the Great Dane among the wiener dogs in the Disney flick "The Ugly Dachshund," lay a stainless steel Ruger Super Blackhawk single action .44 Magnum with ten-inch barrel.

*Continued on page 91*

# MAGNUM *performance*

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Ken Hackathorn

## HAVE GUN — CAN STILL LOSE

**S**o, you carry a handgun for self defense. Your CCW is up-to-date, you go to the range at least every few weeks and practice, and have attended a shooting school or two. Great, you've checked most of the blocks to make you well prepared and ready to deal with any threat you may encounter. Or are you?

Consider the following situation. You are returning to your car parked in the local parking garage. It is late, you notice that the area your car is parked in is not well-lit. As you approach your car, two young males step out of the shadows and move toward you. You quickly move toward your car making sure your jacket is open so you can get to your sidearm. A few feet from your car you hear the words, "Nice ride buddy — how about giving me the keys?" Great ...

You turn carefully as your hand goes to your pistol. One look tells you these guys plan on causing you trouble. A million thoughts go through your head as you draw your handgun to a good low ready position and you announce: "Leave me alone, get away from me." At the sight of your gun, these two bad guys suddenly decide there's something pressing they have to attend to, mumble something about wanting no trouble and disappear like a whiff of smoke. You stand there for a few seconds with the strange feeling of "What in the hell just happened" then quickly check your flanks to insure there is nobody else waiting to ambush or harm you. You quickly re-holster and get into your car.

As you put the key in the ignition you note a slight tremor in your hands. What would have happened if you hadn't had your handgun for protection? After all the training and practice, not a shot was fired and when the bad guys saw your gun they left in a flash. "Wow," you think, "This self defense stuff really works." You feel positive about how things went. With care you back out of your parking stall and leave the parking garage planning on returning home with a story to tell your family.



## Surprise, Surprise, Surprise

**A**fter driving only four or five blocks you are surprised to see flashing blue lights behind you with a police officer signaling you to pull over. A voice from the speaker in the police car orders you to shut off your car, drop the keys out the window and show your hands. "What the hell is going on here," you wonder.

What has happened is the two bad guys who were prepared to borrow your car and wallet have called the police and reported they were threatened by a crazy man with a gun in the parking garage. Guess who has the problem now?

Understand that in our society, he who cries wolf first is often considered the "victim." And in America today, police agencies react very quickly to "man with a gun" calls. The response time is typically short and numerous officers tend to

respond. The fact is that the police are going to treat you like the criminal, disarm you, and may actually take you into custody unless you are really good when you "splain the situation" to them. Many agencies don't give an officer that much of an option on what he can do on a call like this. It's likely you may be arrested — even if he believes your story. You may find yourself in-custody as they attempt to figure out what "really" happened. If the reporting party is anonymous, it may even be more touchy.

In most states, pointing a firearm at another is at least a misdemeanor, and in many it is a felony. Either way, you may find yourself in need of an attorney and subject to the criminal justice system. Oh joy. All the time you will be saying to yourself — and anyone who will listen — "Hey, I'm the good guy in this."

### Wolf! Wolf!



**W**hat did you do wrong? If you have to show your sidearm to defend yourself, make sure you are the first person to call the police, or ask someone else to report the fact you had been threatened and you had to defend yourself. Make sure the complaint to the police comes from you and not someone watching or the

cretins who just tried to rob or intimidate you. All in all, I'd say this alone is a solid argument for a cell phone.

As soon as you're sure the scene is clear and you are safe, dial 911 and report fact you have been assaulted. Give the description of those involved and the direction they fled. Good or bad, this is the way the system works. Make it a point to cry wolf first — and the loudest. It may not sound like the actions of a real tactical tough-guy, but it will give far better results than being on the receiving end of a cop yelling "Show me your hands — now!"



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# COMBATSHOOTING

Dave Anderson

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EDGE HONED**



*Pressing the trigger back 7/16" against pressure of 3.5 lbs. rocks the external hammer back. Another 5/16" movement against 8.5 lbs. fires the pistol.*



*The action of all USP's made since October 1999 can be locked.*

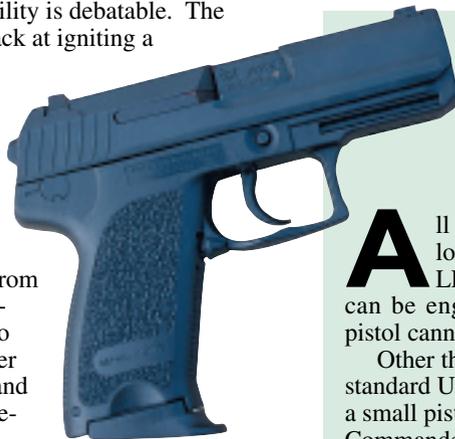
## STRIKE TWO

The LEM design also allows "second strike" capability. If a hard primer should fail to do its thing, the shooter can pull the trigger again for another try. This "uncocked" pull is much heavier since now the trigger has to compress the powerful mainspring as well as the trigger-return spring. The weight of pull from this position exceeded my trigger scale, but I'd estimate it at 13-14 pounds.

The value of second-strike capability is debatable. The advantage is that it gives another crack at igniting a hard primer. On rare occasions I've come across cartridges that failed to fire on the first try but fired on the second try. Current factory ammunition is so reliable, this has become a remote possibility.

That's the only problem second-strike capability will resolve. If the failure to fire results from anything else — a dud round, forgetting to chamber a cartridge, failing to seat the magazine fully, or some other bit of idiocy — the shooter could stand there clicking all day, sounding something like a bad starter solenoid. All without improving his situation one bit.

Some instructors teach a broad-spectrum antidote. If the gun fails to fire, instead of trying to analyze the reason or pulling the trigger again, they recommend the tap-rack-bang drill. Tap the base of the magazine to ensure it is fully seated, rack the slide to chamber a fresh cartridge, and fire. I rather like this approach myself. In any case the USP with LEM gives the shooter the option.



## HK'S LEM LANDS ON EARTH



HK has developed a new trigger module for the excellent USP pistol. Called the LEM (Law Enforcement Module) — as opposed to the Lunar Exploration Module of the Apollo days — the new trigger is an improved double-action only design. Compared to the original double-action only trigger, the LEM provides a pull that is lighter, smoother, with shorter trigger travel and much quicker trigger reset. Currently it's available for law enforcement personnel only with a pull of 7.5-8.5 pounds. A variation with a 4.5-5.5 pound pull is planned which should have considerable potential for production-class competition.

The LEM hammer is actually a two-piece unit with an internal cocking piece separate from the external hammer. When the shooter inserts a loaded magazine and racks the slide to chamber a cartridge, the mainspring is fully compressed. The external hammer then extends slightly from the slide, serving as a visual and tactile indicator the gun is cocked.

When the trigger is pulled, instead of having to overcome the resistance of the powerful mainspring, the shooter is pulling only against the lighter resistance of the trigger return spring for the initial take-up. During this take-up the external hammer is rocked back to its full rearward position.

With the test gun it took a pressure of 3.5 pounds to move the trigger through a travel of 7/16". From there, pressure built smoothly and predictably to 8.5 pounds over an additional 5/16" of travel, at which point the sear released to fire the gun.

After firing, a forward movement of the trigger of just 5/16" was required to reset the trigger for the next shot. There's no need to let the trigger move all the way forward for follow-up shots, although the gun will function just fine if you do. Quick trigger reset is a feature competitive shooters value, as it's one of the keys to fast and accurate shooting.

## Universally Behaved

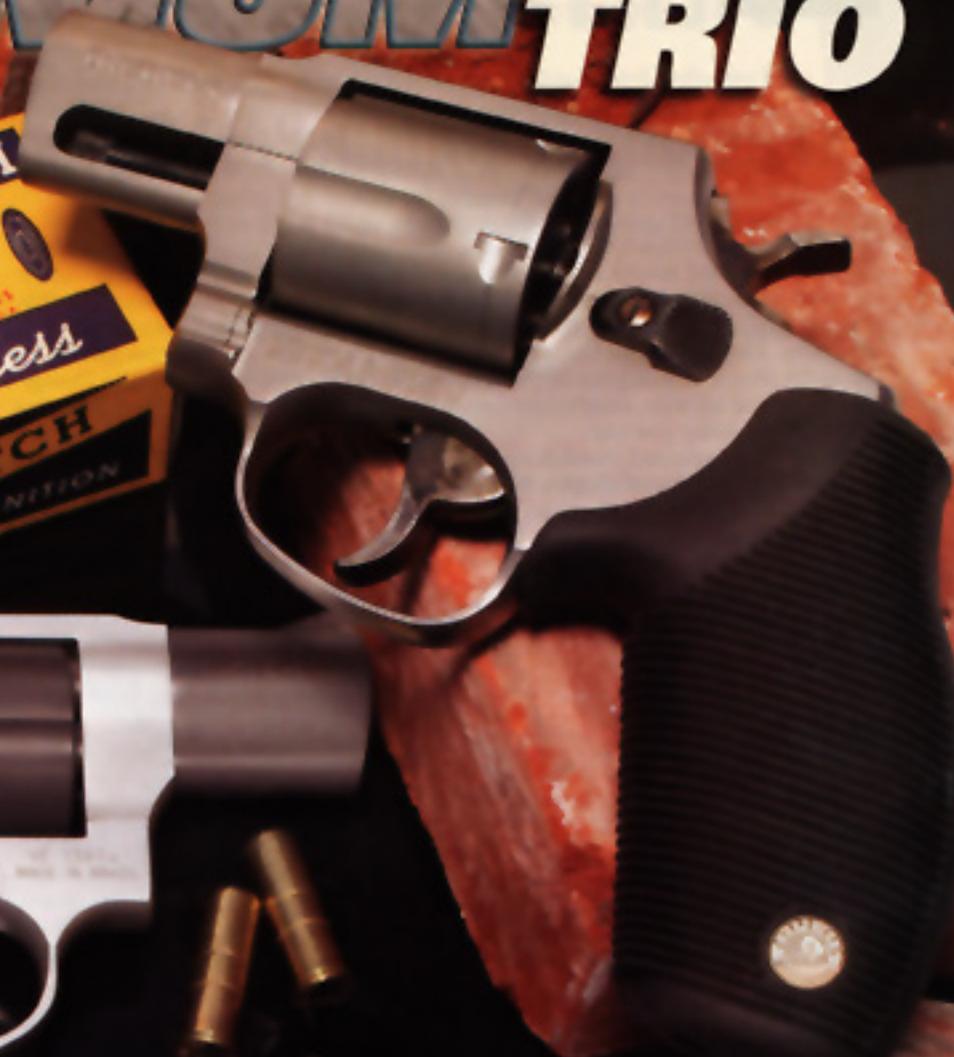
All USP's made since October 1999 have a manual lock inside the back of the magazine well. With the LEM, the action must be uncocked before the lock can be engaged with the key provided. Once locked the pistol cannot be fired, nor can a round be chambered.

Other than the LEM option the pistol is identical to the standard USP Compact. Despite the name, this is not really a small pistol. Dimensionally, it's comparable to the Colt Commander model. Magazine capacity is ten rounds of .40 S&W ammunition.

I have yet to encounter a USP that was not accurate and reliable. The Compact was no exception. It proved completely reliable and with the factory ammunition available, shot 2" groups at 25 yards. The LEM trigger is a practical, well designed, well made feature providing another useful option to an outstanding and versatile pistol.



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See pages 58-59



# PISTOLSMITHING

Alex Hamilton

THE INSIDE  
SCOOP ON  
PISTOLSMITHING  
TECHNIQUES

## Exotic Gunsmithing: Part One

**W**hen a custom gunsmith really reaches his or her prime they become accomplished metalsmiths, blacksmiths, metallurgists, woodsmiths, and tool and die makers and reach a level where no matter what a customer wants, they can be satisfied. Members of the American Custom Gunmakers Guild and the American Pistolsmiths Guild are, simply put, craftsmen and women who can make anything you can dream-up. The Gunmakers Guild members create art in rifles and shotguns and the Pistolsmiths do it with handguns. A few members of the Pistolsmiths Guild, like George Wessinger and his wife, satisfy their customers in both rifle and handgun work adding whatever engraving you like.

Mature, sophisticated shooters who have grown beyond plastic-handled handguns, synthetic rifle stocks and firearms built for function — who are looking for fine equipment they can show off with pride — go to America's finest gunsmiths to satisfy their tastes. Expensive work like leather butt-pads, rust bluing, skeleton butt plates, integral front sights on revolvers, fishscales and checkered texturing and custom ivory grips are made to order for the firearm aficionado who has reached maturity.



STI "SOCOM"



Browning  
beavertail  
welded and  
shaped.

## EVEN AUTOS CAN BE PURTY

**R**evolvers hold an innate graceful beauty that most semiautomatics do not have. However, there is considerable exotic custom work that can be performed on semi autos that will give you something nobody else has, and at the same time empty your old wallet. One modification I like to do is both functional and beautiful — a welded beavertail on a Browning High Power. I believe the High Power is the most graceful, externally well designed semi automatic out there. Its complex, double-tapered slide makes it a delight to look at, carry, hold and shoot — however, old man Browning kinda' lost steam when he got to the rear end.

If you have big hands and your HP has a spur hammer you're going to get bitten sooner or later and, by golly, it hurts like the dickens bringing your day's shooting to an abrupt halt. Bill Laughridge of Cylinder and Slide Shop likes to silver-solder a beautiful beaver-

tail and shape it like a Brown giving it a nice upward sweep that looks really cool. I like to Tig weld the tail on so the joint line does not stand out when the pistol is blued, but the results are the same. A welded and shaped beavertail on your Browning will cost \$125.00 and up, plus refinishing. It's expensive, but well worth it. What price happiness, anyway?

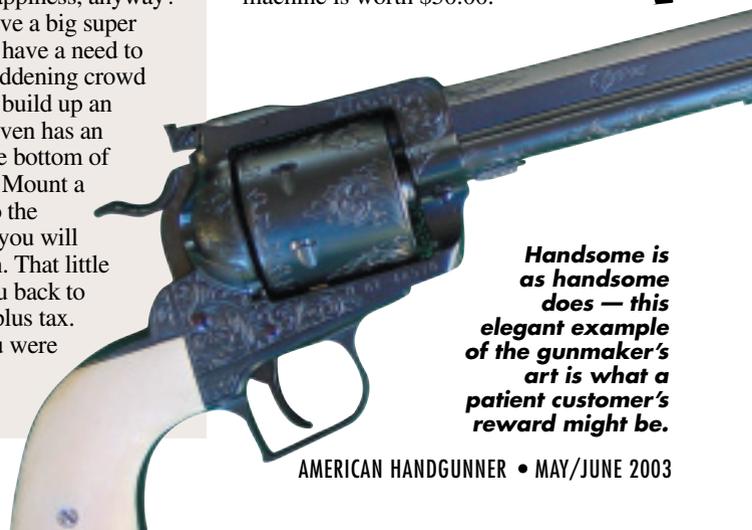
If you just gotta' have a big super custom 1911 style and have a need to pull away from the maddening crowd you can go all-out and build up an STI Socom model. It even has an integral light rail on the bottom of the frame's dust cover. Mount a Surefire flashlight onto the frame and I guarantee you will attract mucho attention. That little eye catcher will set you back to the tune of \$3,000 — plus tax. I'll bet you're glad you were sitting down for that one, eh?

## TAPERED DELIGHT

**O**ne of the most exotic areas in which these artisans work is custom metalwork, like octagon barrels for revolvers. Only a handful of gunsmiths have the ability to cut a tapered octagon barrel. Larry Crow, Hamilton Bowen, Jim Stroh, myself and a few others can create tapered octagon barrels for Ruger and Colt single actions. But hold onto your wallet 'cause it's going to cost anywhere from \$700 to \$1,000 to have a tapered octagon barrel built. The price will include a front sight and fitting an ejector rod. I like to use Jack Weigand's interchangeable blade front sight milled into the front of the top flat for a pleasing melded-in look.

Fitting the ejector rod is possibly the hardest job which, in turn, is a big expense. The rod housing must be tapered on the bottom to match the taper of the flat, and the sides must also be tapered so they will not overlap the edges of the flat. Fitting the ejector housing is done completely by hand with a file.

To make a tapered octagon barrel involves an expensive custom made fixture. The fixture has a dividing head on the left and a tailstock on the right. The barrel is held between these two parts and the fixture is swiveled to the proper taper angle. Considerable mathematics are involved to determine how deep each cut should be to achieve the dimension across the flats. It is a complex mess fraught with demons and Murphy's Law, but when done correctly produces a beautiful, graceful barrel that will make the gunsmith and owner proud. Hell, just lifting this heavy fixture onto the milling machine is worth \$50.00.



*Handsome is  
as handsome  
does — this  
elegant example  
of the gunmaker's  
art is what a  
patient customer's  
reward might be.*

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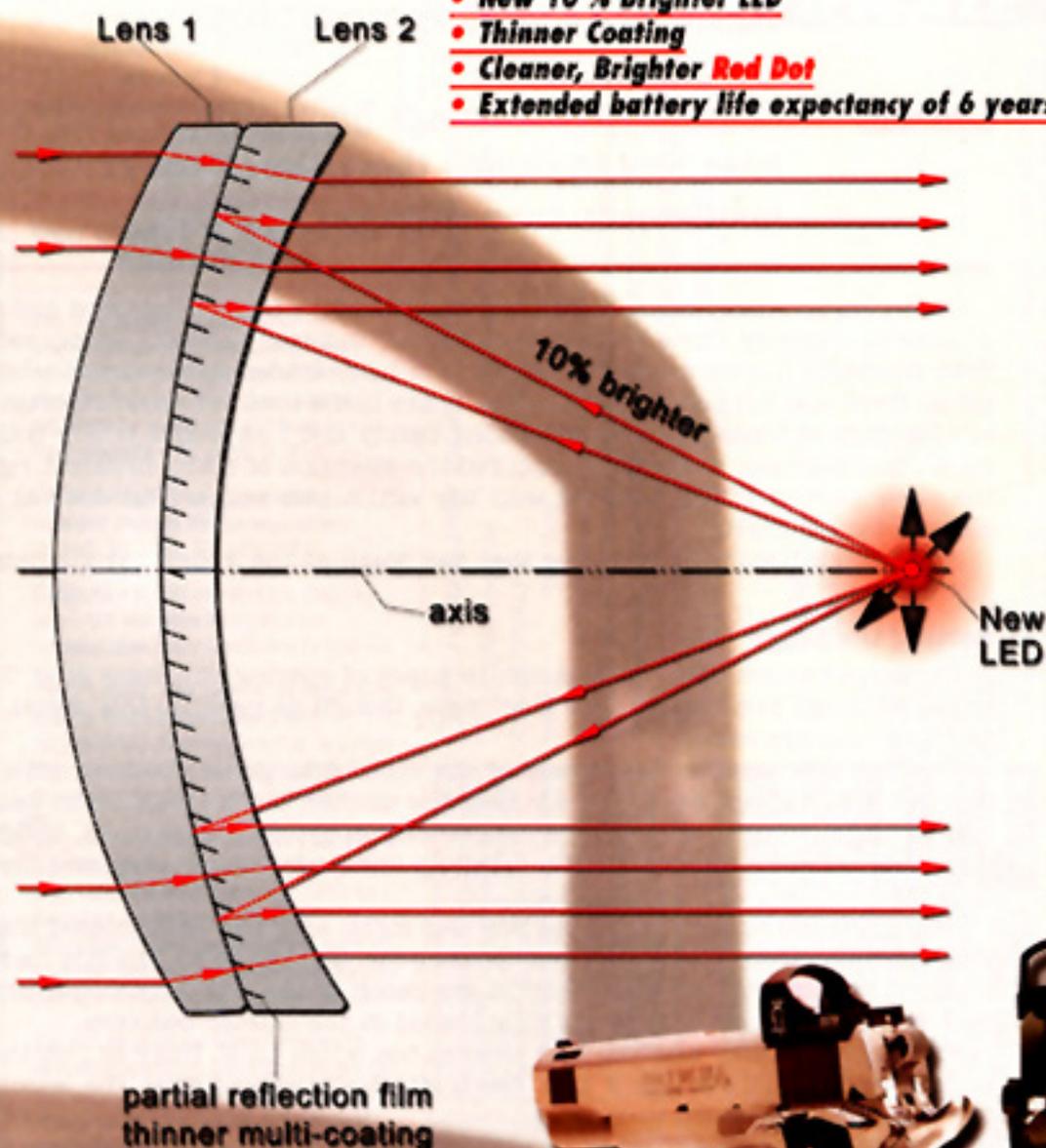
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# HANDLOADING

Charles E. Petty

SAGE ADVICE  
FROM THE  
HANDLOADING  
GURU

## DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME, KIDS

Everyone makes mistakes. It's human nature. But what we'd rather not do is make them in front of a crowd of witnesses who see, and know, exactly what you did wrong and are not at all bashful about rubbing your nose in it.

Let me present the new 10mm Petty Awshit.

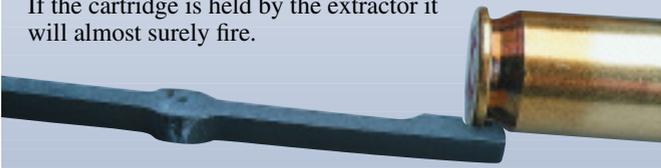
It was really just a simple case of mistaken identity, which, tragically, took place in front of a crowd of other writers. We were getting training on Oehler's Model 43 Personal Ballistics Laboratory. With it the hobbyist can get remarkably accurate measurements of chamber pressure by simply gluing a small strain gage over the chamber of the gun. Two wires are soldered to the gage — routed through a controller that plugs into a laptop computer. The results are very much like those used in industry from equipment that costs tons more.

Most of my work used Contender barrels in a wide range of calibers. The gun is mounted in a Ransom Rest and one of the precautions taken is to be sure the wire doesn't get pulled off the gage. First the gauge is covered with a blob of fast-setting epoxy to protect the connections and then a coil of extra wire is taped to the barrel to provide a little slack if the wire gets jerked anyhow.

The wire is taped to the barrel with black electrician's tape. As luck would have it the best place to put all that stuff is right over the markings on the barrel. No trouble. We are, after all, highly trained professionals who can tell those things at a glance.

So when I got ready to shoot the .357 Magnum I picked out the barrel, wired everything up and fired the first shot. The report was a weak pop and there was no reading of pressure or velocity. The case that came out was fat in the middle and reasonably normal at both ends. You could also see the impression of rifling on the forward quarter inch and the middle was expanded by .05". Much to my surprise the case wasn't split, since brass stretched that much usually does. I caught a lot of grief over that. Don't know why, for all I had done was fire a .357 Magnum cartridge in a 10mm Auto barrel.

Some other interesting oops include firing a .40 S&W in a .45 ACP and 9mm Luger in a .40. Wait, you say, both those cartridges will fall right through the barrel. And so they will, were it not for a handy gadget called the extractor. You'd think that loading the smaller cartridge in the wrong magazine would be very noticeable, but loading magazines is such an automatic thing we do it almost unconsciously. If the cartridge is held by the extractor it will almost surely fire.



## Headspace, Legend, And Other Lies

Somewhere there's a stone tablet with the words: "Automatic pistol cartridges headspace on the case mouth" boldly emblazoned on it. One of the really neat things about conventional wisdom is that sometimes it's true. And sometimes it's irrelevant.

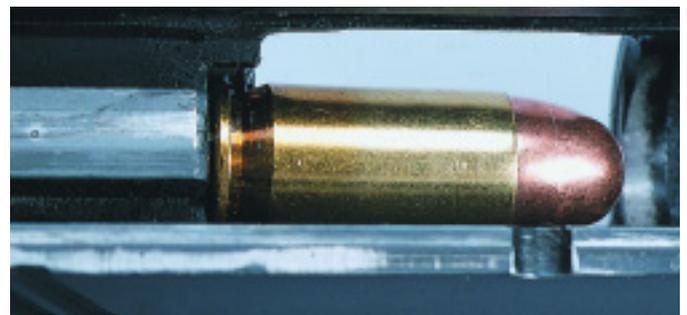
A glance at the SAAMI drawings for cartridges and

chambers reveals a source of confusion. They are conveniently shown one above the other with bunches of dimensions, but the only two we care

about here are case length and chamber depth. Since the .45 ACP is everyone's favorite cartridge let's use it as an example. The .45 ACP cartridge drawing shows a dimension of .898" with a tolerance of  $-.010"$ . In other words a case that measures anywhere between .898" and .888" is okay and it isn't unusual to find them even shorter. Below it is the drawing for the chamber, and here the dimension is also .898" but with a tolerance of  $+.012"$ . So anything from .898 to .920" is peachy.

Now let's add a complication in the form of the extractor. If the extractor wasn't there every case would go into the chamber until it hit bottom and it really would headspace on the case mouth. Of course it might not go bang then either. Given the variables in cases and chambers there might not be enough firing pin protrusion to hit the primer.

So how the heck does the good-old .45 manage to go bang so reliably? It's simply because it has a good extractor. When the round is stripped from the magazine it slides under the extractor hook and is held against the breech face. Unless the slop between the rim thickness and the width of the cut in the extractor is greater than the firing pin protrusion, the gun can't help but go bang. Imagine that. Ain't conventional wisdom grand?



From left to right, 10mm Petty Awshit (.357 fired in 10mm chamber); .40 S&W fired in .45 ACP chamber; 9mm Luger fired in .40 S&W chamber



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# TAFFIN TESTS

John Taffin

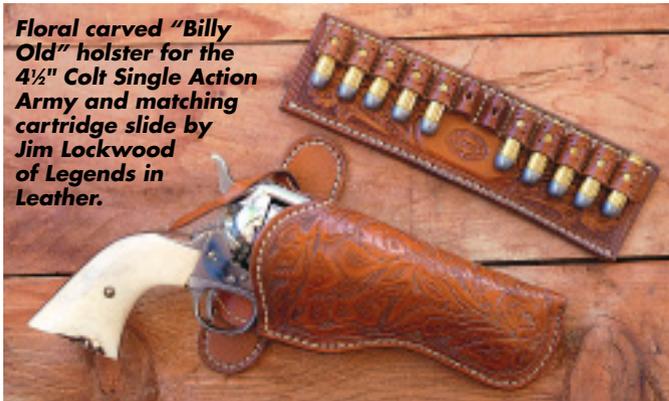
**THE SIXGUNNER  
HIMSELF: GUNS,  
GEAR AND MORE**

## New Leather Designs For Concealment and Hunting

**J**im Lockwood of Legends in Leather is a master leather craftsman specializing in reproducing exact duplicates of the rigs worn by “B” western movie heroes, big-budget Western stars and the familiar leather seen in TV westerns of the 1950s and 1960s. He learned much from Bob Brown, who made leather for stars in the 1930s including Hopalong Cassidy’s unique belt and holster.

Lockwood is a true student of the old West and carries out his leatherwork to the most minute detail. When I rendezvoused with him in New Mexico last summer he actually had a rig with him that had been worn by the Duke himself, John Wayne, in several of his early 1930s “B” Westerns. Even when it comes to carrying concealed — or open for that matter, since Lockwood lives in an open carry state — he stays with the traditional. Jim recently made up a concealment rig for me to pack a 4¼" Colt Single Action Army.

The concealment holster is fully lined and floral carved, with a neutral cant. It uses a minimum of leather, like the TomThreepersons, but rides slightly lower and also features a low cut-out in the front, below the hammer, for an easier draw and easy one-handed re-holstering. Rather than being sewn to the holster, two Chicago screws secure the belt loop, and this loop also has two stabilizing ears that ride behind the pants belt. An over-the-hammer safety strap is also featured. To match with the holster, Lockwood also sent a cartridge slide that is floral-carved and holds 12 rounds. Normally such a slide would be too stiff to ride comfortably on a pants belt, however Lockwood cuts a large slot in the back of the slide so it easily contours to the body and also allows the positioning of the pants belt loop in the middle of the slide. A nice added touch features the “see through” holes in the cartridge loops that are reminiscent of the rigs worn by stars in the 1930s. Lockwood has named this rig the “Billy Old” after a famous Arizona Ranger from the early 1900s. Good rig.



**Floral carved “Billy Old” holster for the 4½" Colt Single Action Army and matching cartridge slide by Jim Lockwood of Legends in Leather.**



**Above, Wyoming Combination Holster by Von Ringler for the 14" Thompson/Center Contender. Left, C. Rusty Sherrick crafted this horsehide rig for a 3½" Colt New Thunderer.**

## A DEUCE OF MAKERS



**L**eathersmith C. Rusty Sherrick works in horsehide and exotic leather and has come up with a high riding concealment rig for a 3½" New Thunderer in .45 Colt. Being of horsehide it maintains its shape without being bulky and also holds the gun without the need for a safety strap. The holster is boned to the counters of the single action and is basically a belt slide with a holster body incorporated. It rides high and tight and easily concealed.

Sherrick makes holsters for about any handgun and specializes in easy to pack hunting rigs, defensive rigs, and cowboy holsters. The Super Redhawk is a large sixgun weighing nearly four pounds with a very long barrel. Much too large to pack comfortably in any hip holster, at least until Rusty entered the picture. For the Ruger Super Redhawk, Sherrick crafted a very light weight crossdraw holster of horsehide with a half flap covered with shark skin. A most attractive rig that rides high and comfortable on the waist belt on the off-side. Sherrick now calls this Big John’s Half Flap Crossdraw.

Von Ringler is the originator of the Wyoming Combination  
*Continued on page 102*

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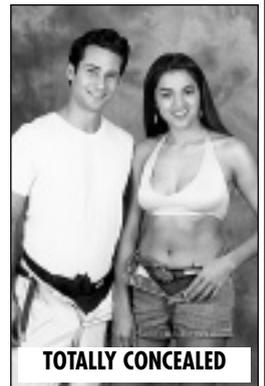
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# HANDGUN LEATHER

Cameron Hopkins

FROM CLASSICS  
TO CUTTING-EDGE  
IN CARRY METHODS

## The 911 Turbo Holster



**M**itch Rosen is short of neither talent nor bravado. His skill at leathermaking is evident in every facet of his handmade holsters, from the expertly boned fit to the finely sewn stitching. His self-assuredness is equally evident in every facet of his business, from the swagger of his company name to the boldness of his prices. Mitch Rosen Extraordinary Gunleather is indeed the Porsche of holsters.

Rosen specializes in concealment holsters. There are no high-speed IPSC race rigs or concho-encrusted cowboy models. His array of offering is not small, however, and runs the gamut from ankle holsters to shoulder setups to inside, outside and on-the-belt models. Every one is a virtual category leader in design and function.

Rosen is also known for the exquisite quality of his leather. His stock in trade is the finest cowhide. Yes, Ricardo, there is even Corinthian leather. Rosen offers perhaps the widest range of exotic leathers this side of Gucci, from crocodile to shark. He once even made a pocket holster for a Seccamp from tanned frogskin.

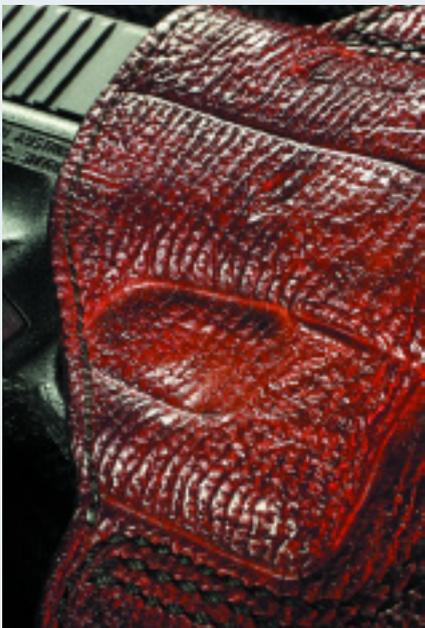
Needless to say, you will not find so much as a molecule of Kydex or an atom of nylon in his traditional shop. You might, if you look under the sofa, find a scrap of horsehide. Begrudgingly, Rosen offers horsehide to “those who have been successfully



advertised to.” The bespectacled former stock broker insists that fine cowhide is and always shall be the best material for a long lasting, high quality handmade holster.

As for his bravado, Rosen’s holsters run about twice what even a good alternative might cost. If a nice Galco pancake sells for \$65, a Mitch Rosen Extraordinary Gunleather version will be \$125. Did we mention that Porsches cost more than Mustangs? Well, they do. And that’s what is technically known as the price of poker.

## THE UPPER LIMIT



**S**plain this to me, Lucy — how in the world is it possible to sew two flat pieces of leather together and create a holster so exquisitely beautiful that it belongs in the Met? The answer is in the hands of Mitch Rosen, an artisan who has mastered the art of stitching like Barry Bonds has mastered the art of hitting. We find a stunning example of this phenomenon in Rosen’s Upper Limit belt holster for a Glock G27.

The secret lies in good old fashioned handwork. Rosen fits the Upper Limit, like all of his creations, with a traditional wet boning method, however, the degree of fit is unsurpassed. Rosen holsters emit a characteristic “click” when the gun is inserted because the handboned fit is so tight. Indeed, no snaps, thongs, breaks or straps are needed to secure a gun in a Rosen-fitted holster because the boning is so precise.

“There is no substitute for precise fitting to insure a secure fit and smooth draw. All of our outside-the-pants holsters are fitted so the holster is indented into the ejection port, front of the trigger guard, and also firmly into the rear of the trigger guard. We have been doing this for over a decade. It is this trigger guard fitting that causes the weapon to ‘click’ into the holster,” Rosen explains.

The Upper Limit is a minimalist design of what is generically called a pancake. Rosen made ours from sharkskin, dyed a distinctive orangish-red. The fit is truly exceptional. We inserted an unloaded, chamber-empty Glock G27 with a full magazine and turned the holster upside down. We shook. We shook harder. We shook really hard. We even asked James Bond’s bartender to have a try. All to no avail, the Glock stayed in its “click-fit” place.

If nothing else impresses you — not the triple-reinforced stitching, not the quality of the leather, not the painstaking handwork — then at least give Rosen his due on “click-fit.” The trigger guard recess in the holster conforms to the gun like spandex on Britney Spears. The accent lines that follow the contour of the gun are tighter than the tolerances on the gun itself.

Which brings up an interesting paradox. The Upper Limit is so well made that it almost seems incongruous to put a Glock in it. (Oops ...  was that my outside voice?)

For more information contact, Mitch Rosen Extraordinary Gunleather; [www.mitchrosen.com](http://www.mitchrosen.com), (603) 647-2971.

# THE SIXGUNNER

John Taffin

*Pre-War Colt New Service "RUSSIAN AND S&W SPECIAL .44" is now ready for new service thanks to Qualite Pistol & Revolver.*



## RESCUING A CLASSIC



**E**veryone who has read my articles, columns and books over the years knows of my passion for the .44 Special. Be it a Colt Single Action or New Frontier, a Smith & Wesson 1950 Target, a Ruger Flat-Top or Old Model .357, the .44 Special gives me an immense amount of shootin' pleasure. The one .44 Special I have never owned is a Colt New Service.

There were more New Service Colts produced from the late 1890s until 1941 than Colt Single Actions between 1873 and 1941 (when both models ceased production). Colt Single Actions are easy to find — New Services are not so easy. Narrow the search to a .44 Special in either model and it becomes extremely difficult. It has been my good fortune to fire a Colt New Service Target Model 7 1/2" .44 Spe-

cial belonging to my good friend Allan Jones of CCI/Speer. That old sixgun shoots like it has built-in radar and is an example of the highest pre-war gun building skills prevalent at Colt before I was born. It is the only Colt New Service I have ever seen marked "RUSSIAN AND S&W SPECIAL .44" on the barrel. I had previously owned a Colt Single Action so marked, but I deemed it so valuable I swapped it to a collector for all the money in it plus two shooting Colt Single Actions, a Second Generation .44 Special and a .45 New Frontier.

### **Opportunity Knocks**

When I was contacted by a reader with a New Service .44 he thought I might be interested in I jumped at the chance, making arrangements for the old Colt to be shipped to me. Now normally I am a non-violent, peaceable man, but when I saw what someone had done to this grand old gun I wanted to break bones and make bruises!

The New Service was indeed marked "RUSSIAN AND S&W SPECIAL .44" but it was all downhill after that. The lanyard ring was missing, the action was out of time, the factory grips were gone

*Colt New Service .44 Special is only slightly larger in size than the Smith & Wesson 1950 .44 Special.*

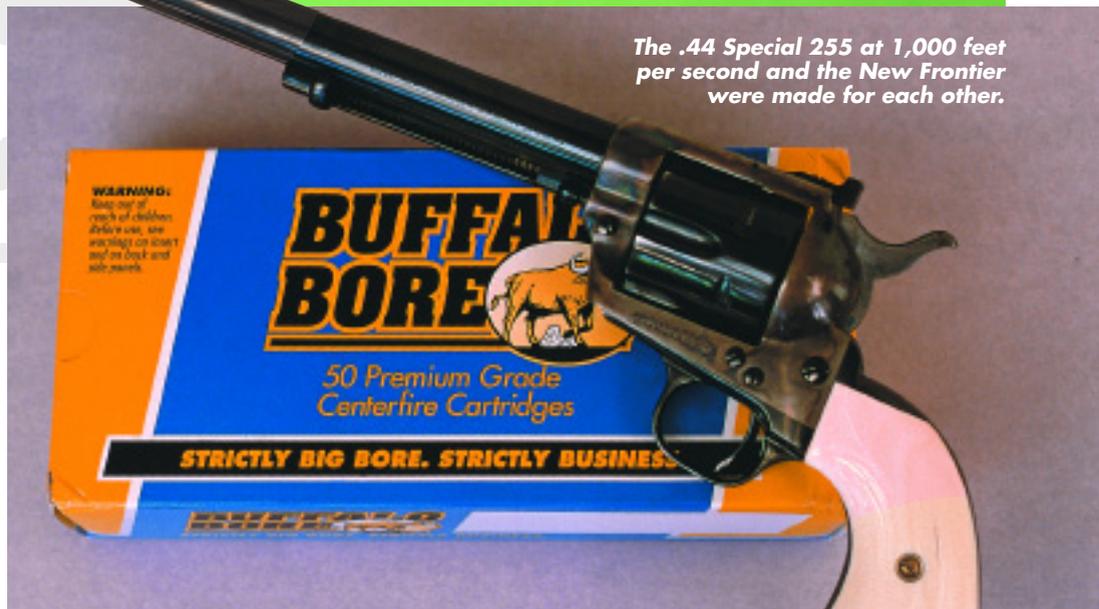




**Heavy .44 Special loads from Buffalo Bore work well in a pair of Colt New Frontier .44 Specials and Ruger's Super Blackhawk, shown below.**



**The .44 Special 255 at 1,000 feet per second and the New Frontier were made for each other.**



(replaced by a serviceable but non-excitable pair of Jay Scott imitation rosewood stocks), and what had once been a beautiful 4½" fixed sighted New Service, was now a half-breed. Someone had fitted the frame with a Smith & Wesson adjustable rear sight while leaving the front sight intact. The result was a sixgun that shot 18 inches high. There outta' be a law.

No way was this sixgun worth the asking price but I could see real possibilities when left in the hands of a sixgunsmith who understood old Colts. An offer was made and accepted and I had a .44 New Service Colt badly in need of an expert's touch. I had fired the .44 before purchasing it to make sure it would group alright, so all was well in that department. It would be a matter of mating the rear sight with a suitable front sight to get it to shoot to point of aim, plus a little action-tuning.

The only sixgunsmith I know acquainted with the New Service is Milt

Morrison. Remember, these sixguns have not been made for 60 years. It was duly shipped off to Milt at Qualite Pistol & Revolver along with a wish-list. Morrison would have it for over a year while he tried to find a couple of new parts. It's still missing the hammer-block safety as found on double actions since before World War I. Some un-thinking (read stupid) indi-

vidual had taken this part out making it safe to carry only with five rounds and the hammer down on an empty chamber, just like a Colt SAA. If anyone should have one of these parts I would be most interested in purchasing same, forthwith.

*Continued on page 106*



# THE 10-RING

Commander Gilmore

**STUPID  
CROOKS AND  
BUNGLING  
BANDITS**

## "IT'S AS PLAIN AS POO ON YOUR SHOE"



Sequoia Blankenship

**T**hat's what Sergeant Alan Piper, a senior scientific investigator of the Queensland, Australia, police told reporters about the arrest of a betting parlor holdup man. It was the poop that got him.

Fleeing the scene after pulling his robbery at gunpoint, 26-year old Jacob Smith stepped in a pile of dog poop, leaving nicely defined shoeprints on the sidewalk, and picking up bits of the poo in his treads. Smith committed the crime with a sheet over his head to conceal his identity, and he canned the sheet afterward, but held on to his shoes. Bad move. Not only were the treads a perfect match when the cops finally caught him, but Piper could prove that particular batch of dog poop left in the treads was also a perfect match for the poop at the scene. It all came from the same dog on the same day after Fido ingested the same meal. That was enough for the jury. Now Smith has only a pile of poop to blame for his ten-year, ten-month prison sentence. That stinks.

## He Took Their Paper, But He Left His Gold

**I**t takes a real mental giant to lose money on a successful bank robbery, but this dude had the talent. Striding into the Wachovia Bank branch in North Miami Beach, our man pulled a pistol from his pocket, did the usual stick-up speech, and within 30 seconds was on his way out the door with a bag of loot. Nice job, right up until the point where he firmly shoved his pistol back into his pants. Boom!

Witnesses in the bank weren't sure at first where the shot came from or where it went, then noticed their suspect sorta hoppin' up and down and going "Owie-owie-owie!" He crab-walked out the door grimacing, spotted his getaway car and driver waiting across the street, and headed that way — without lookin' both ways before crossing. Maybe his mind was on something else, like his crotch. Too bad. He never saw the white van bearing down on him.

Apparently the driver of the van didn't see him either — not until the impact, and the sickening noise made by the dude being dragged under the van. Miraculously, when the van finally screeched to a stop, our luckless lad crawled out, hobbled painfully over to his waiting ride, and eased himself in. He got away not quite clean, we think.

The one feature all the witnesses could agree on was the suspect had two gold front teeth, but even that didn't prove to be too helpful. A crime scene tech found both those choppers on the asphalt under the van. Now local cops are looking for a suspect with a possible perforated penis and a significant gap in his grin.

## HE WAS TOO SMART FOR THOSE DUMB OLD COPS

**T**wenty-year old Alex Pauleus is one crafty critter. He and two pals had pulled a clean armed home-invasion robbery of an apartment on Court Street in Brockton, New Jersey, and the cops didn't have anything on him. He thought. Sorta bluffing maybe just a little, officers told him one of the victims, the lady of the house, had positively ID'ed him.

"How could she tell it was me?" he asked them. "I had a mask on." Then he relaxed, smug. Then he thought about what he'd said. Too late, Alex. You don't get "do-overs" in crime confessions.

## We Don't Have ALL The Stupid Ones

**J**ust one more piece of proof that stupidity knows no borders, folks. This 47-year old wannabe crime-king stuck up a post office in Halmstad, Sweden, and initially, everything went better than expected. He told 'em to freeze and they froze. He told 'em to raise their hands, and they did. He ordered one of 'em to empty all the cash out of the counters and stuff it in a sack for him. Done! Man, everything was going so well! Then he went a little too far.

When he was about to leave, as kind of an afterthought, he

*Continued on page 82*

# LEGEND

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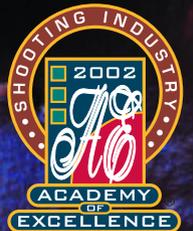
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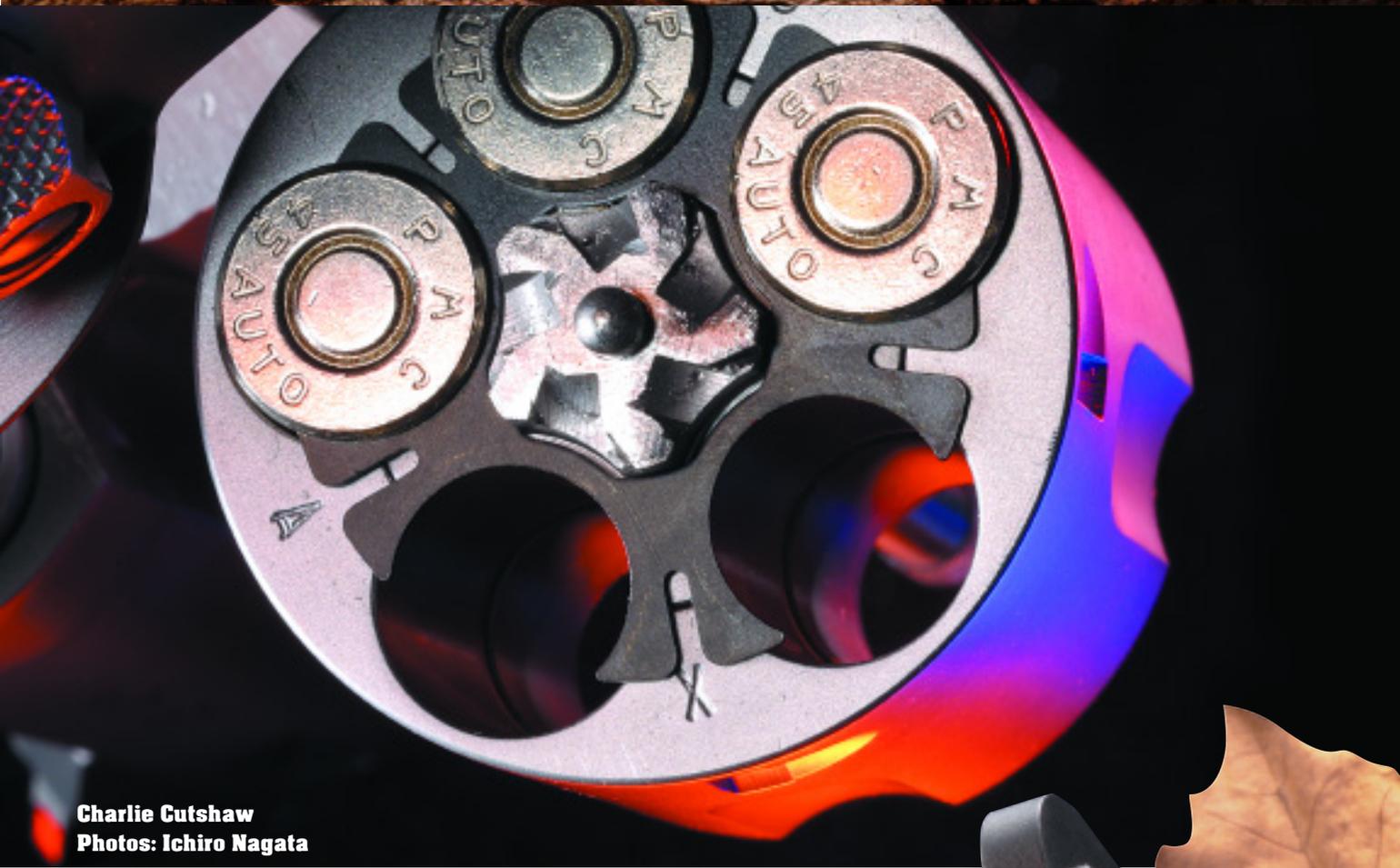
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# Taurus' Stellar Tracker .45 ACP



Charlie Cutshaw  
Photos: Ichiro Nagata

## TRAIL GUN *Extraordinaire*

**I**t's an unfortunate fact of life that things don't always go the way we wish. Although we hope for the best, time and experience teaches us we must expect and prepare for the worst. In the case of the outdoor sports enthusiast, preparation includes having the right equipment to deal with emergencies. Dozens of cases are documented each year where people are seriously injured — or even seriously killed — by wild animals. In the east, bears can be a

problem, as are coyotes, wildcats and feral dogs. Unlike the propaganda espoused by some “conservationists,” all bears are not clones of Winnie the Pooh, any more than all deer are descended from Bambi. In other areas, alligators, although protected, have been known to attack humans and no matter where one travels, poisonous snakes are a real presence. Thus, in addition to all the other measures taken to prepare for the worst, the serious outdoors kinda' person, may





### Accuracy/Velocity Chart

Load	Velocity	Group
Black Hills 230 Gr. FMJ	822	3.5"
Wolf 230 Gr. FMJ	843	3"
Taurus 185 Gr. HP	843	3"
Winchester SXT 230 Gr. JHP	907	3.3"
Summit 230 Gr. JHP	940	2.8"

Chronographed using CED Millennium Chronograph.  
Shot off-hand at 25 yards.

also be well-advised to have a “little something” in his or her kit.

Most guns used for such things are not specifically designed for backwoods use, but the fact is such handguns do exist and in most instances they are revolvers. There’s a good reason for the “outdoors” revolver as opposed to the “outdoors” semiauto. The revolver is the simplest solution for a person who is not a gun-guy who practices shooting on an irregular basis. Further, the revolver remains the most reliable handgun short of a single shot pistol. For the hiker or backwoods bicyclist who carries the handgun solely for self-protection and may not own another gun, the revolver is easy to use and carry. The revolver requires less maintenance and has fewer working parts than a semiautomatic pistol. The manual of arms for the revolver is also simpler. Unlike the semi-automatic pistol, which requires a “tap – rack – bang” drill in case of a misfire, the revolver needs only another trigger pull

to fetch a fresh cartridge up for firing. Thus “outdoors” handguns have generally always been revolvers. That said, what defines an “outdoors” handgun?

### **The Definitive Word**

In his classic *Textbook of Pistols and Revolvers*, published in 1935, Julian Hatcher defined the outdoors revolver as follows:

*An outdoorsman’s revolver is one that uses a cartridge having high velocity, flat trajectory ..., wind bucking qualities above the average, and shock power...; that has a clean, crisp trigger pull so it can be shot accurately; that has a barrel not only long enough to insure ample distance between the sights, but also weighted and balanced so as to avoid any effect of either undue weight or muzzle lightness. It must also have sights with*

*Continued on page 107*

“ All bears are not clones of Winnie the Pooh, any more than all deer are descended from Bambi. ”



**Ribber grips and an integral lock are just two stellar features of the Taurus Stellar Tracker.**





# SPECIALIZATION - IS FOR - INSECTS

## POCKET TOOLS FOR PISTOL PEOPLE



Roy Huntington

**T**he older I get the more forgetful I become. Of course, some people say I've always been that way and I just happen to be taking note of it now. I respectfully disagree with their collective opinions but nevertheless, it brings up a good point. Or two.

The last time I went to the range it suddenly dawned on me I had to make six trips to the trunk in order to feel properly prepared for any eventuality once at the local dirt patch. I counted tool boxes, widgets and doo-dads — most of which were intended to handle unforeseen events like broken sights and such — and wondered how I could lessen the load, as it were. Ditto for my last hunt in the great outdoors. Once my pack was prepped, it took the combined efforts of a very kind young guide and his able helper to hoist it into the back of a man-sized Dodge truck.

There was no small number of secret looks cast slyly between them during the process. Something had to be done.

Which brings us nicely along to where we sit at the moment. I rethought the situation and realized once again my “be prepared for any eventuality” mind-set (I’ll bet you have one of those too...) had brow-beaten me into dragging along about five pounds of iron and plastic in the form of tools, pliers, drivers, pounders and screwers, all “just in case” my grips came loose. Shudder the thought.



Top to bottom: Leatherman, Schrade, Kershaw, Buck, SOG, Schrade, Leatherman, SOG and SOG.



I had become what Robert Heinlein, author and pretty smart fellow, most bemoaned — a slave to specialization. Old Bob thought such things were best left to the likes of insects and any man (or woman) worth their salt should handle any situation thrown their way with a minimum of fuss and celebration. As I

**A deft touch with a built-in file can zero on the range.**



**Ouch! Stop! Don't! Know your limitations when it comes to pocket tools. Unscrewing barrels is best left to a "real" tool ...**



gazed at my bulging pack sitting forlornly and threadbare on the garage floor, I took Bob's arguments to heart and realized it was time to lighten the load. Not being an insect, I figured it was time to invoke some serious de-specialization.

### **All For One**

Ever since Tim Leatherman thought it was a good idea to put a few simple tools in a nifty folding thingy, the race has been on for the "best" pocket tool. The race continues today some 20 or so years later and we're better off for it. As I gathered my wits I realized the solution to much of my problem lay right in a nylon pouch on my desert walking belt. Leatherman's "The Wave" rocked the boat when it appeared and with its blade accessible without opening the tool, it immediately got everyone's attention. Mine too, and that's why it rides on my belt. But having said that, I thought a semi-serious look at what we should expect from these little friends might be in order. Something along the lines of "What can one do with one of these cool goodies?"

Pistol shooters are, as a breed, pretty much fuss-budgets and gadget-lovers. At any particular moment we will more than likely have two or three handguns, various amounts of ammo, a pocket knife, flashlights and who-knows-what-else, secreted about us within spitting distance. All making us terribly prepared for "Whatever might come along" or some such. I understand, believe me, and it probably can be properly labeled a sickness. But since we suffer from it, I've got to tell you, you're remiss if you don't count a pocket tool as among those goodies you can reach for. Sort of an "in for a penny, in for a pound" kind of a thing. And here's why.

### **Can't Rebuild Your Engine**

Nope, you can't build a house, fix that broken main-frame or straighten your bent axle when you're 57 miles off the road in the desert. But, you can certainly tighten that recalcitrant sight screw you put off doing before you left, squeeze that snap tighter on your backpack, pull

your boot lace through that too-tight hole in your soggy Herman Survivors, nip off that annoying wire in your old truck seat that's been poking you in your neither-regions the past 284 miles and generally take care of those zillion little things that often (usually?) crop up when you're not around your toolbox. Or anyone else's toolbox either.

But it's important to keep things in perspective here. We can't mosey off to the North Pole with a SOG Power Lock in our pack thinking it will save our bacon when the bear finds us, but it just might open that can of beans when you need it most. The Kershaw Multi-Tool — the "Holy Grail" of tools according to Editorial Assistant Kim — would be awfully comforting during your \$1,500 rifle class you've saved two years to attend, as you notice your \$500 whiz-bang sight is teetering in its spindly mounts while Clint Smith stares at you with his steely baby blues, patiently waiting for you to do something. Did I mention the other 19 attendees were also waiting, sorta' patiently?

A Schrade ST2 fits neatly on a key-chain and may bail your keister out when

you notice your mustache is sticking out like an errant sea anemone's fingers, just as you're about to walk through the door to that job interview at Smith & Wesson. Snip, snip and you're as handsome as ever. Well, at least you don't look like a sea anemone.

Shall we go on? We could take this another step to make sure you have a tiny knife to go along, since — let's just admit it here — it's not always easy to use the built-in knives in these things. A little Buck, Benchmade or some such handy separator makes having a pocket tool that much nicer and a good excuse to buy another knife.

### **So Now What?**

As they say, "Just Do It" and find one you like. Keep it clean, oil it and you're even allowed to sharpen it sometimes. The next time a young lady asks "Does anyone have a screwdriver" and all your buds with their high-tech tactical folders stand around, stare at their feet and mutter their apologies, you can whip out your Wave and say, "Need some pliers too pretty lady?" Like Bob said, specialization is for bugs.



**Kershaw's "Holy Grail" of pocket tools.**

# IRON VS. STEEL



## THE STEEL CHALLENGE: WHERE IRON MEN TAKE ON COLD STEEL!

**Mike Dalton**

**T**he Steel Challenge is just six years older since its rebirth in 1997 and has provided the gun industry — and the media — with the speed shooting excitement needed to show the fun and enjoyment of shooting.

With the avalanche of anti-gun propaganda, we need shooting events that will make new and veteran shooters alike want to become involved in the shooting sports. The Steel Challenge format is simple and that's why it's so much fun. Hit steel targets varying in size and distance as fast as possible, with handguns and — new for 2002 — Bar-Sto/Vang Comp shotguns.

The Steel Challenge “World Speed Shooting Championship” has always been far more than just a shooting match to Mike Fichman and I, when we drew the stages and made the decision to create the most visual and spectator exciting shooting competition we could envision. What was our goal? In our eyes, simply put, it was to create more pro-gun voters. It's our belief by growing the shooting sports, more people will become involved in shooting in a more enthusiastic fashion. This makes them care about shooting in much more than a casual “ho-hum maybe I'll go



*Left to right, Mike Dalton, match winner Rob Leatham and Mike Fichman*

*Photo: Miryam Thompson*

shooting sometime this year” attitude.

Many times we find people haven't been shooting in more than four or five years. Why don't they shoot? It's often because there aren't any shooting activities that inspire them to get out and enjoy their guns. If people don't shoot, then they don't need bullets, primers, powder, hearing protectors, safety glasses, guns, sights, holsters or any other shooting goodie. Much of the gun industry has agreed with us and has

Shelby Spees took the Bar-Sto Precision "Top Pre-Teen" slot. She was 12 at the time and shot a .45 auto.



Miculek proves he can shoot something other than revolvers.

**“The action is fast and furious as the air is filled with brass, smoke and excitement...”**



helped award over a million dollars in cash and prizes over the last six World Speed Shooting Championships.

Mike and I believe that, like other sports, we have to inspire enthusiasm for shooting by promoting our champions. People need to see and hear about success and how they can be part of the excitement. It's my opinion too much of the gun industry continues to compete for a bigger share of a shrinking market rather than aggressively creating new business for their products. There are some great companies that "get it" and actively promote the shooting sports. We're fortunate to have over a hundred of these companies involved with the Steel Challenge.

Since the Steel Challenge is more than a shooting match, there were two "hands-on" events for the spectators. Browning and Para-Ordnance both supplied guns for spectators to try their luck shooting

for prizes. Hornady and Lapua sponsored the ammunition and every person who participated was entered into a drawing to win four Browning and Para guns. We hope to have more of these "hands-on" fun competitions for the 2003 event.

### **Not That Hard?**

To become the "World Speed Shooting Champion" one must negotiate seven stages of five steel targets, varying in size from 10" circles to 18" x 24" rectangles positioned 7-yards to 35-yards from the shooter, firing a minimum of 180 shots. A wide-range of individual shooting skills must be blended into symphony of visual and motor responses — all the while controlling ones nerves while magazine photographers and the Outdoor Life Channel's "American Shooter" film the action.

This year the competitor who was able



“ They were hitting the targets so fast that the match officials were having difficulty seeing that the targets were struck. ”



Photo: Miryam Thompson



Cowboys can play too.



to “put it all together” was Rob Leatham. Rob not only won the “Open” title but also the “Limited” iron sighted, non-compensated category, with his combination of Springfield Armory guns, Safariland holsters, Vihtavouri Powder and Aim-point scope. Rob’s performance was nothing short of stunning against one of the strongest fields of shooters the match has ever seen. They included Doug Koenig, Jerry Barnhart, Tatsuya Sakai of Japan, Angus Hobdell of the United Kingdom, Todd Jarrett, J.J. Racaza, Jerry

Miculek (2002 Open Revolver Champion), Everett Brunelle (Junior Champion), KC Eusebio and many others. Rob won the “Open” match with a blistering total of 68.45 seconds with second and third place finishers, Tatsuya Sakai and Todd Jarrett finishing two seconds off Rob’s pace. It should be noted a score in the area of 70-73 seconds was expected to win the event. With that in mind, it’s an interesting fact that six shooters bested the winning score of 72.77 that won the 2001 tournament.

Rob’s score can be further analyzed by dividing the 27 strings of fire into his raw score total and what is revealed is an astonishing time of 2.83 average time for each string of fire. It’s also worthy of note this time includes the reaction to the Competition Electronics audible start signal, drawing the gun from a holstered position with the hands held shoulder high, hitting five targets and — because the “stop target” is “hard wired” — the flight time of the bullet from muzzle to impact.

*Continued on page 80*

# The TV Network you've waited your whole life for . . . is Here!

*Here's a sample of our  
television show line up -*

American Outdoorsman

ATV Television

Babe Winkelman's Outdoor Secrets

Chevy Sportsman

Eastman's Hunting Journal

Gone Huntin'

Hunters Journal

Hunting Across America

Hunting the Country

Joe Bucher Outdoors

Midwest Outdoor Magazine

Northwest Hunter

O'Neill Outside

Outdoor America

Outdoor Traditions

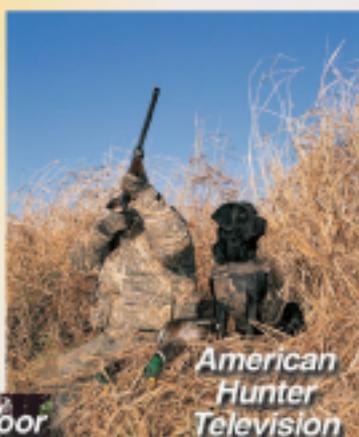
Red Hawk Outdoors

Safari Hunters Journal

Texas Trophy Hunters

Wild Outdoors

Woods N' Water



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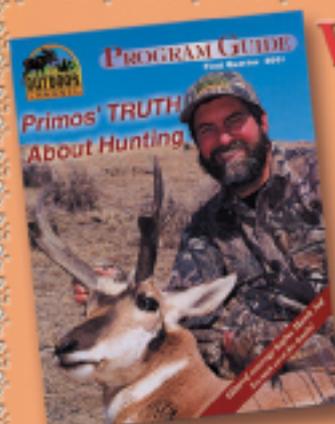
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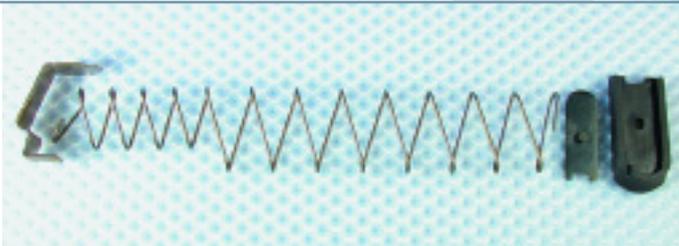
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# Magazine Spring Madness



‘Creep’ to your ‘Elastic Limit’ to un-earth the urban legend of ‘spring-set.’ John S. Layman

**T**he shooting sports are full of some of the most knowledgeable and capable people you’ll meet anywhere. I’ve been impressed consistently with the abilities of those I meet at the range to diagnose and fix a gun problem with as little as some spray lube and a cotton swab. However, sometimes a myth will creep into the folklore.

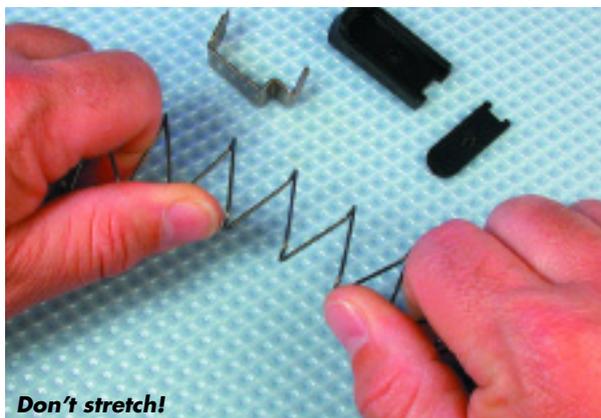
The magazine spring myth has been around for many years and is growing in popularity. It goes something like this: “You should unload your magazines when they’re not in use or the spring will weaken causing failures to feed.” This has gone as far as shooting competitors actually unloading their magazines between stages to extend the life of their springs. A variant of this myth is: “You should never load a magazine to capacity and should always leave it one round short.” What if you need that round some day?

Recently, I read an article in a gun magazine suggesting you rotate your magazines so the ones not in use can “recover and rest.” The same author uses the phrase “spring-set” to describe weakness of a spring because it was compressed for a long time. Hogwash. There’s nothing

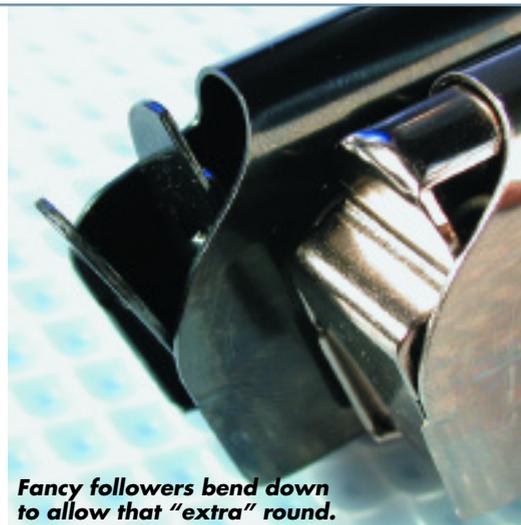
further from the truth. Springs don’t care how long they’re compressed and don’t require rest, recreation or even a vacation from time to time.

## Shameful Spring Benders

To put this one to rest, you have to understand creep. Creep is the slow flow of a non-ferric metal like copper, brass and lead under force. At temperatures outside of a furnace, steel doesn’t have any appreciable creep. Under most conditions, steel flexes and then returns to its original shape. When pushed past its elastic limit, steel will bend and not return to its original shape. All designers of well-made magazines make sure the spring never approaches the elastic limit when the magazine is fully loaded.



Don't stretch!



Fancy followers bend down to allow that “extra” round.

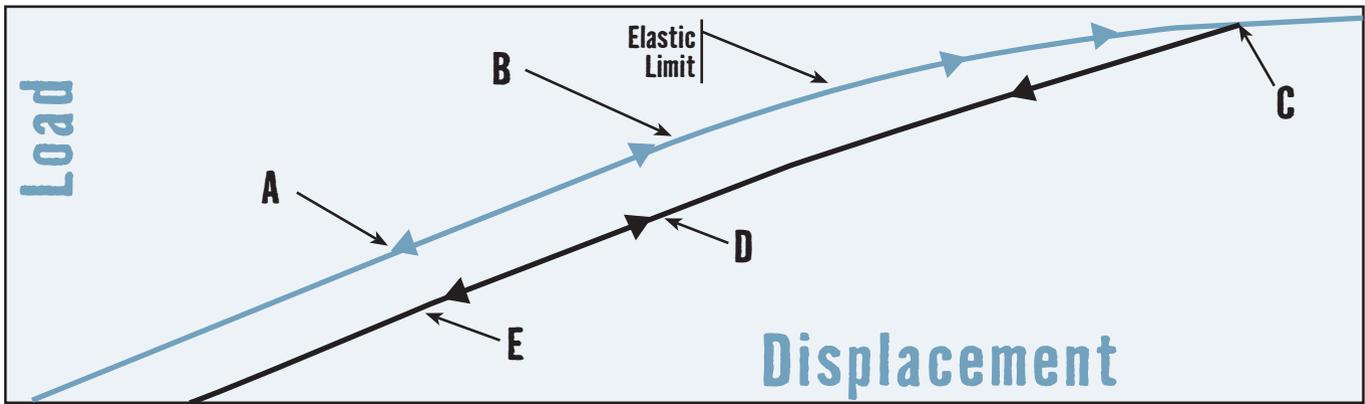
## Definitions

**Creep:** The flow or plastic deformation of metals held for long periods of time at stresses lower than the normal yield strength.

**Elastic Limit:** The maximum stress that a material will stand before permanent deformation occurs.

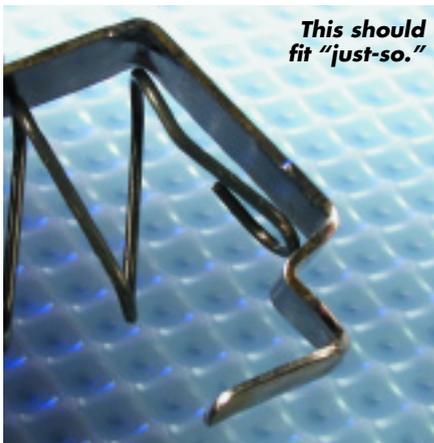
**Yield Strength:** The stress at which the metal changes from elastic to plastic in behavior, i.e., takes a permanent set.

**Permanent Set:** Non-elastic or plastic, deformation of metal under stress, after passing the elastic limit.



Honest. This means the spring will not weaken when the magazine is fully loaded — not even over an extended time. Like 50 years. *American Handgunner* recently ran a story about a magazine full of .45 ACP that had been sitting since WWII and it ran just fine on the first try. So there you go.

Now that the light of truth is leaking out, lets talk about what is causing failures to feed. The only way to weaken a magazine spring is to flex it past its normal range (elastic limit). If this is happening, somebody is trying to overload a magazine or has “adjusted” it by bending the spring. Both of these could cause feed failures. Shame on you if you’re a spring bender.



**This should fit “just-so.”**

Carlton Nether, Customer Service for Beretta USA, tells us keeping a pistol magazine loaded for an extended period doesn’t cause magazine spring failure, however, failures to feed can result. He says, “The ammo will ‘roll’ in the magazine. If the mags are kept loaded and moved around a lot — say on a cop’s belt — the rolling action can, over time, cause creases in the cases. These creases can cause malfunctions. Also the top bullet will roll against the magazine lips and creasing can occur there as well. Just check old ammo that’s been bouncing around in a magazine for a long time.

We tell police officers if they keep loaded magazines, take a few seconds to “cycle” the ammo. Periodically unload the mag and reload it in a different sequence. This movement will allow the bullets to be in different parts of the magazine and help eliminate creasing.

At STI, Dave Skinner, President and CEO says, “Personally, I rotate my ‘under the bed’ and ‘under the seat’ mags about every six months. I always empty them the ‘fun’ way and have never had a failure.” Given what we learned above, this sounds like a good idea. Smith and Wesson customer service also says magazines can stay loaded indefinitely without hurting the spring.

As we add force onto a spring, it will

*Continued on page 104*

## Magazine Recommendations

▣ Clean your magazines when they get gritty. Apply oil then remove all excess. Oil attracts dirt that may cause malfunction.

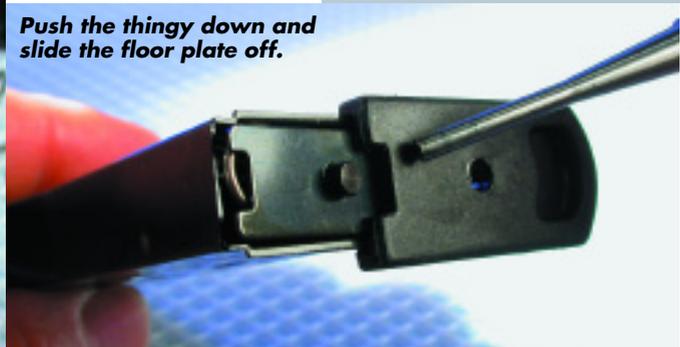
▣ If you find rust on the spring, this is the culprit. Rust changes the thickness of the metal and reduces the force applied to the follower. Cleaning off the rust may help. For a gun you depend on, replace the spring. All the major brands and most of the smaller ones have replacement mag springs available or try Wolff Springs.

▣ If you keep a magazine loaded for long periods, rotate the rounds every few months. If you carry a pistol on the job or in your car, cycle the ammo frequently. These actions prevent creases from forming which may cause a misfeed.

▣ If you experience feed problems, first clean your magazines and weapon. Fire a couple magazines of new factory ammo to see if this resolves the problem. If not, send the magazine back to the manufacturer — or toss it.



**Why you need to be able to take your mags apart.**



**Push the thingy down and slide the floor plate off.**

# MASTER FORGER!

## Mastersmith Kirk Rexroat Blends Blades To Perfection

Pat Covert

Photos: H. Rexroat Photography

**K**nifemaker Kirk Rexroat is one of those people many of us would like to trade places with. Instead of grinding out paper, Rexroat grinds steel. His daily commute can't be too far. When you live in Wright, Wyoming — a town of only 1,200 people and no stop lights — it's hard to drive across town without nodding to just about everyone, since you know them. And at the end of the day, instead of storing his day's work on a hard drive, he holds it in his hands — concrete evidence that something actually took place.

Growing up in a sportsman's Mecca, Rexroat had an affinity with knives early on: "Being raised in Wyoming in a household of four boys, scouting, camping trips, hunting and knives were simply a part of life. On my finger is a scar received when I was about eight years old. In church I was using my mom's Girl Scout knife to help make a log church out of sticks and the knife journeyed away from the project. Needless to say I gained an early respect for knives."

Like many custom knifemakers he remembers that seminal moment when his true love affair with knives began. "When I was a kid my dad received a knife for renewing an outdoors magazine subscription. It had a fixed blade with a black handle, finger grooves and a brass guard. I thought that was the coolest knife." In all

likelihood that simple knife didn't cost even a pittance — but it planted a seed in the youngster's mind that would grow like a weed in the years to come.

As a young family man, Rexroat remembers his first experience of actually making a knife. "A guy at work decided he was going to make his dad a knife and that sounded like a fascinating project, so newly married, I began building one sitting on my living room couch with different grits of sandpaper, and a knife blank. With age comes wisdom, so lets just say I've relocated from the couch."

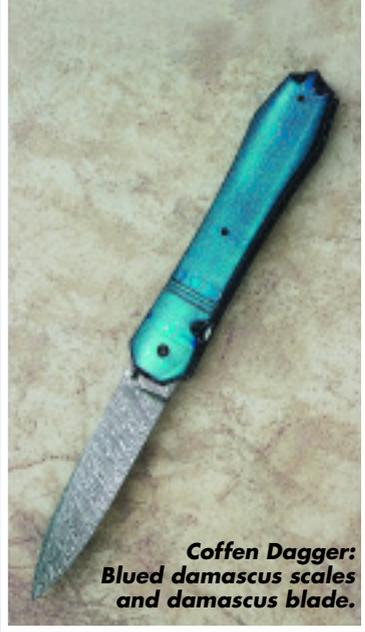
That's for sure. Today Kirk is 45, and his knives can sell for thousands of dollars. It's a reputation Kirk has earned over the years by making knives of extraordinary quality, and he has a true knack for



**Wright Dagger:**  
Damascus and  
Sambar Stag.

**California Dagger:**  
Damascus and ivory.





**Coffen Dagger:**  
Blued damascus scales  
and damascus blade.



**Don't Fence Me In Bowie:** Bucking horse  
mosaic damascus blade and walrus ivory.

finding the perfect blend of steel and handle to give his edged artistry personality. If there's a downside to Rexroat's knives, it's that it is simply hard to believe he could make them any better!

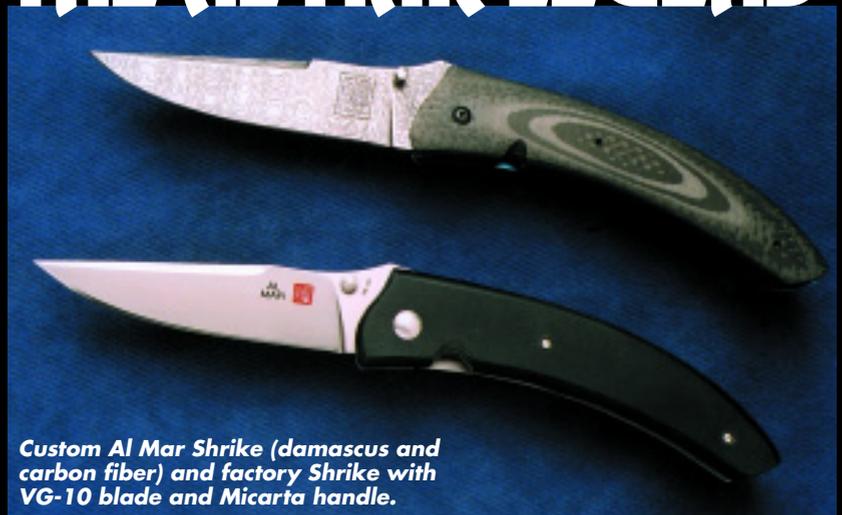
### Forging Ahead

Rexroat has a way with working with metal that few custom knifemakers achieve, helped along in his early years by his career as a welder. He understands steel and reads it like a book. While many of his peers buy their Damascus steel from artisans, Kirk forges his own and shapes it to perfection. This allows him greater control over his projects and, no doubt, adds to the personal satisfaction he gets out of every knife he makes.

He is a master of patterned steel, and enjoys matching his finished blades to just the right handle materials. Per Rexroat, "Damascus is my favorite. Picturing a Damascus pattern in your mind and then creating steps to bring that image to reality is part of the fascination of forging. With forging you can create a blade any shape or size, not being limited to a bar of steel's dimensions. I often forge 52100 or ball bearing steel." Further testament to his prowess, Kirk is a member of the American Bladesmith Society; receiving his Journeyman stamp in 1997 and garnering the prestigious Mastersmith stamp in 1999.

*Continued on page 114*

## THE AL MAR LEGEND



**Custom Al Mar Shrike** (damascus and carbon fiber) and factory Shrike with VG-10 blade and Micarta handle.

**W**hile many knife companies have loyal followings, few have achieved the cult status that surrounds Al Mar Knives. The company was founded by Al Mar in 1979 after an eight-year stint with Gerber, where he had achieved chief designer. Al had a vision for a different kind of knife company, one that would create an entirely new segment of the edged tool industry known as the "specialty cutlery" market. Al's idea was to produce a knife that would meet or exceed the quality standards of a custom knife — at a price the consumer could afford.

Al Mar's knives caught on quickly, appealing to the serious user and upscale production knife collector. Unfortunately, the energetic and visionary knife mogul would only see success for a short thirteen years. He died a tragically early death in October of 1992 of a brain aneurysm at only 54 years of age. To many of his fans and admirers, Al Mar was an icon before his death and his untimely passing made him a legend.



# THE OLD AND THE NEW

DAMASCUS &  
TITANIUM JOIN  
FORCES IN  
THIS CASPIAN  
CLASS-ACT

Charles E. Petty  
Photos: Ichiro Nagata



**T**itanium is the latest material to take the gun business by storm. Smith & Wesson started it with their Airlite revolvers, Remington uses it for a rifle action, and now Caspian Arms has made a Government Model frame from the wonderful stuff. This may very well be the most dramatic use of the metal in firearms.

The beauty of Titanium is that it combines light-weight with great strength. You could make the analogy that it has the weight of aluminum with the strength of steel. That's not ironclad — just a point of comparison.

When you ask the purchaser of a duty handgun you can almost bet that weight will be high on their list of concerns. It seems as if everyone wants the absolute lightest thing they can find. But sometimes putting weight first is a big mistake. As weight decreases, recoil increases and it doesn't take long for recoil to become a problem for the shooter. Everyone has a different view of that, but it takes an especially different shooter to say that shooting an 11-ounce .357 Magnum is fun. For more years than I care to remember, my favorite carry gun has been a Colt Lightweight Commander and I shoot it well, but it's not my choice for recreation. Recoil is sharp and twisty.

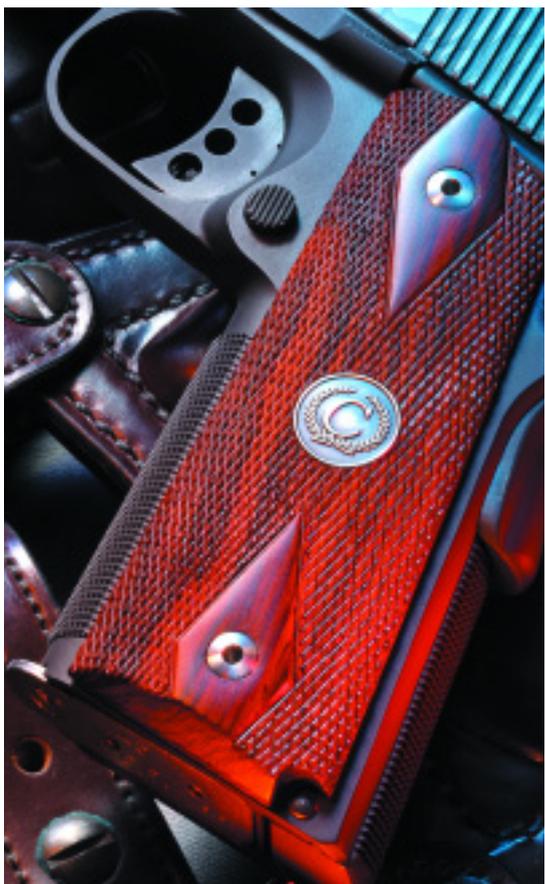
At the 2000 Shot Show in New Orleans I met Gary Smith of Caspian Arms and he showed me one of the first of their investment cast Titanium 1911



frames. Their Damascus steel slides had been around for a couple of years, but it was sort of a no-brain idea to couple the two. The idea became an assignment and the results are stunning. With thanks to Ichi, the photos you're looking at might even be a tad prettier than the gun here beside me right now.

There are more than a few technical things we need to discuss. I'll bet money that some of you, when you read "investment cast" dismissed it immediately because it wasn't a forging. I also know

there is a certain segment of the shooting population who is not going to let something so mundane as a fact alter their perception of reality. After all someone, somewhere — who probably didn't know squat about metallurgy — told us that castings were bad. "They are weak and if you have an investment-cast gun you will come down with unspeakable social diseases and be shunned by all." The fact is it's very difficult to distinguish a well-made investment cast firearm from one made from a forging.



The operative word here is “well made.”

Bill Ruger and his legion accomplishments have been well chronicled in the months following his death. But one thing that seems to have been missed in his eulogy was the fact that, almost single-handedly, Ruger brought investment casting to firearms and proved — time and again — that properly done investment castings are more than suitable for gunmaking. Lots of folks don't know that Ruger is a leader in the industry, with foundries in New Hampshire and at their plant in Prescott, Arizona. Quite a few years ago I visited there and saw some early work with titanium castings for use in golf clubs, artificial joints and aircraft parts. There surely must be some black magic in casting the titanium, but it obviously can be done well.

Titanium has become the darling of the firearms industry. We are seeing it in a number of different applications, but the most direct comparison here is with aluminum alloys such as those used in government model frames. My titanium frame is .8 ounces heavier than a comparable aluminum frame. The slide is a bit heavier too, so the complete pistol weighs 2.4 ounces more than the Lightweight Commander. Even though the difference in ounces is small, the feel is another matter. The extra barrel and slide weight move the center of gravity forward a bit and produce a felt recoil impulse that is a little sharper than a full-sized gun, but not nearly as snappy as the Commander.

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## ACCURACY TEST RESULTS

Load	Velocity	1	2	3	Avg.
Black Hills 185 gr. JHP	790	2.03	1.65	1.90	1.86
Federal Match 185 gr. SWC	846	1.35	1.60	1.81	1.59
Federal 165 gr. Ballisticlean	1,062	1.25	1.38	1.44	1.36
Speer 230 gr. Gold Dot	882	1.17	1.15	0.95	1.09
Remington 175 gr. Disintegrator	978	1.48	1.48	1.01	1.32
Taurus 185 gr. Hex bullet	1,001	1.75	1.99	1.62	1.79
Winchester 230 gr. SXT	882	1.44	1.16	1.70	1.43

*Accuracy results are 10 shot groups @25 yd. from a Ransom Rest. Velocity is the instrumental average of all shots @15' as measured with a PACT chronograph.*

FRED CRAIG

CUSTOM CASPIAN

1911





**S&W**  
45

**Supreme**

20 Centerfire  
Cartridges

WARNING: Keep out of reach of children.  
Read all Warnings.

NOVAK'S

AMERICAN  
**HANDGUNNER**



We can't see it, but the strength of the titanium is a big deal. Data provided by a titanium vendor provides a valuable comparison. It shows the Titanium is over six times stronger than aluminum and virtually equal to some steel.

### **Layered Magic**

The other thing Caspian has done is bring newly-manufactured damascus back to firearms. Long before we knew much about steel, iron bars were wrapped around a mandrel and forged together. The wrapping accounted for the intricate patterns that characterize early damascus gun barrels. Knives and swords were

made by a different procedure that involved many layers of folded metal. The new process is highly proprietary and is only available from the Swedish firm Damasteel AB. Caspian buys billets of the raw stainless damascus and machines them into slides and hammers.

The process by which the damascus is made is vastly different. It is a Rapid Solidification Powder metal process. Molten steel is injected into an atomization chamber filled with nitrogen gas. It is atomized into small particles, which solidify very quickly. The resulting powdery metal is collected in a steel cylinder. At least two types of steel powder are

used and they are heated to welding temperature under a vacuum. From there the raw material is pressed, forged and rolled to form a flat bar which is then heated and twisted at a rate of 10 to 100 turns per meter. This creates the spiral damascus pattern and it is forged again to form a billet. None of the patterning is really visible until the billet is cut and polished a bit, but the process means that no two parts will look the same.

The raw material Caspian receives is just a black bar roughly 1" x 2" and about two feet long. First it is rough-sawed into blanks for slides. The material cut off is used to make their damascus hammers. The raw material has no voids and is simply a gorgeous heat-treatable stainless steel.

Gary and I discussed what we wanted to do and the decision was unanimous: a simple gun that would make maximum advantage of the two materials. Caspian does not sell complete guns — they sell parts. The next decision was even more critical. Who to build it? Gary suggested young Kansas pistolsmith Fred Craig. I had tested one of Fred's guns and found the quality of work to be excellent. That decision turned out to be easy too.

Smith dispatched a set of parts to Kansas and in the fullness of time — a long fullness — I got a phone call. Gary is bubbling, "I got the gun. You're gonna love it." The next morning I concluded he was right. It was one of those "wow" moments, if you get my drift. Of course the bad news of this part is that it's *Handgunner's* custom to send cover guns to Ichi

“ TITANIUM IS OVER SIX TIMES STRONGER THAN ALUMINUM AND VIRTUALLY EQUAL TO SOME STEEL. ”



before testing them. That way any nicks or dings that sometimes happen won't ruin those luscious photos. I did study the pistol and workmanship thoroughly and with no small amount of hand-wringing. Off it flew to Ichi. Then I waited some more.

When my gun finally came home — did I mention that an attachment had formed? — I was able to finally begin to shoot it. Some questioned my sanity and thought it was too pretty to shoot. They were ignored, since all proper handguns should be shot. On the first lengthy range session everything wasn't perfect. The pistol is very tight and often did not want

to go that last sixteenth of an inch into battery. That was traced to the barrel hood and the tiniest touch of a file eliminated the bind. I know the same thing would have been accomplished with more shooting but to tell the truth, all my patience quotient had been used up waiting — twice — and I couldn't stand it any more.

### **Such A Pleasure**

A thorough inspection revealed no other flaws and the next range run consumed 100 burp-free rounds. Inspection again, this time with detail-stripping, found nothing but good news. It was at this point I wrote

the check — had to have this one.

While Titanium is as strong as steel it isn't as hard and the slide can not be fitted as tightly to the frame as we'd see in a well-built steel frame gun. The same restriction would apply to one with an aluminum alloy frame. With the barrel removed there was a small amount of both horizontal and vertical movement in the slide, but the finish was marked evenly along the rails. Most folks don't know that a well fitted barrel takes up quite a bit of slide movement and with the barrel installed slide movement is

*Continued on page 116*



# Gun Juice And Elbow Grease



**ARE TODAY'S  
HIGH-TECH CLEANING  
GOODIES WORTH THE  
BUCKS? YOU BET!**

**Roy Huntington**

**O** kay you old-timers out there, we have to face the fact Hoppe's No. 9 solvent, that mystical purveyor of all that smells good about guns, hits 100 this year. Shall we wax and wane prophetic for a bit here? Dare we reminisce of the old days, when the subtle siren smell of No. 9 could bring forth a state of mind that tottered dangerously near ecstasy? Let's do.

One whiff today and I — like you — am swept back to a skinny 9-year old's wonder-days, where a well-thumbed Gun Digest proved the reasons we could quote the specs on every .22 rifle in existence. A Remington 514 single shot, a bottle of

Hoppe's No. 9, some old T-shirt patches and a Dad's stern look about safety and gun care, and we were, indeed, in heaven on earth. They say that can't happen, but they're wrong and you and I know it.

I once was walking the floors of the Shooting and Hunting Outdoor Trade Show (SHOT) when it happened. There, just out of proper reach of my nostrils, I could barely make out the tendrils of a familiar smell. It was gunny, it was comfortable, but it eluded me. I walked, following my nose until it dawned on me. No. 9 had its beckoning fingers out, pulling me gently along. Soon I found the source and the big sign on the booth read "Hoppe's" and I knew I was home. There,

a smiling employee was sprinkling a bottle of the golden essence around the carpet in the booth, doing a slight jig as he did so.

“But why?” I asked, foolishly. “You know why,” he said. “And you’re living proof it works.” Yup. Now I understood how all those bucks feel when they follow their noses to those scent baits. At least I was met with a smile and not a .44 Magnum.

## Times Change

But, technology changes and we have to remember Hoppe’s No. 9 dates to before the Model T Ford and just barely to the Wright Flyer. Could it really be just as good today as all those years ago? Was Grandpa really right? Yes — and no.

If you look at the photo you’ll see an actual scene from my actual workbench at home where I do my actual gun cleaning and stuff. You’ll see a wide cross-section of cleaning goodies, oils, polishes, greases and other near-magical concoctions guaranteed to keep your zero, break down your fouling and improve your trigger pull. Maybe even your sex life. But hiding there, almost shyly, you’ll see a bottle of good, old No. 9. And for a reason. You probably own a favorite screwdriver, a favorite pistol and even may drive a favorite old car. New things may work better, but sometimes the comfort that comes with familiarity can overcome performance shortcomings. At least that’s what my wife always tells me.

But now, it’s confession time. The No. 9 usually only comes out when I’m in the mood for some memories. If a vintage S&W Hand-Ejector needs some attention, the Hoppes gets the nod. I simply can’t bring myself to use a spray, wonder-cleaner on one. If, however, the job at hand is a difficult one, or it involves some really problematic cleaning situation, I



reach for the “big guns” of the business.

Not to avail yourself of modern chemical and cleaning tool technology is like refusing to go see a doctor because he uses those “modern, new-fangled contraptions” and they’re scary. There’s nothing scary about today’s new cleaning contraptions or the goo that goes along with them. They most often simply work. And work well.

All that NASA moon technology and all those college graduates have been put to good use and the gun biz got the benefit of some of it. Miracle lubes, solvents that really do “melt” away copper and other fouling, cleaning gear (rods, brushes, electronic gadgets) and more help to make the clean-up chore about as easy as it can get. Don’t throw the Hoppe’s away, just add to it.

## Some Specifics

Cleaning techniques are not what we’re talking about here. That will happen another day, in another story.

We’re concentrating on the fact if you allow yourself to hesitate to reach out at your favorite shooting emporium and actually try something new, you’ll be wasting precious time and energy wearing out brass brushes. Today’s companies are awfully smart at times, and I have to tell you, these days, almost every time I get finished trying out a new cleaning product, I’m usually impressed. Is every one a miracle cure? Nope. Is every new product the one that will blow the others away? Not that I’ve seen.

However, there is so much good “stuff” out there, it behooves you to open that moth-infested wallet of yours and take part in the fun. One of the just plain-nicer things today are the handy and complete cleaning “kits” available to the average shooter. Unlike the old days when a cleaning kit was a rod, a few patches, a brush and a can of oil, many of today’s kit-offerings are wonderful to behold. The Klean Bore Tactical Cleaning Kit and the Hoppe’s Premium Gun Cleaning Kit are the kinds of things I’m talking about here. They all offer a solid base to start building your own kit on.

From Protec, Sentry Solutions, Tetra Gun, Microlon “Gun Juice”, Klean Bore, Ventco (FP-10 lube, Quick-Scrub and more) and Muscle Products’ Firepower PP-10 CLP, you can get an idea of what’s going on in our neighborhood. Suddenly, good old Hoppe’s No. 9 has some competition and some of it is from Hoppe’s itself. They have their own line of “modern” solvents and cleaning gear too.

So get aboard. Your life will be easier, your wife will love you more, your dog will respect you, your kids will admire how smart you’ve become and oh yeah, your guns will be cleaner. Still though ... there’s something about a dash of No. 9 behind the ear of a purty girl that makes things extra-special. But then, you know what I mean, I’ll bet.



**All-in-one kits like these from Otis, left, and Hoppe’s are handy and always a good way to start your “gun cleaning gear” pile.**



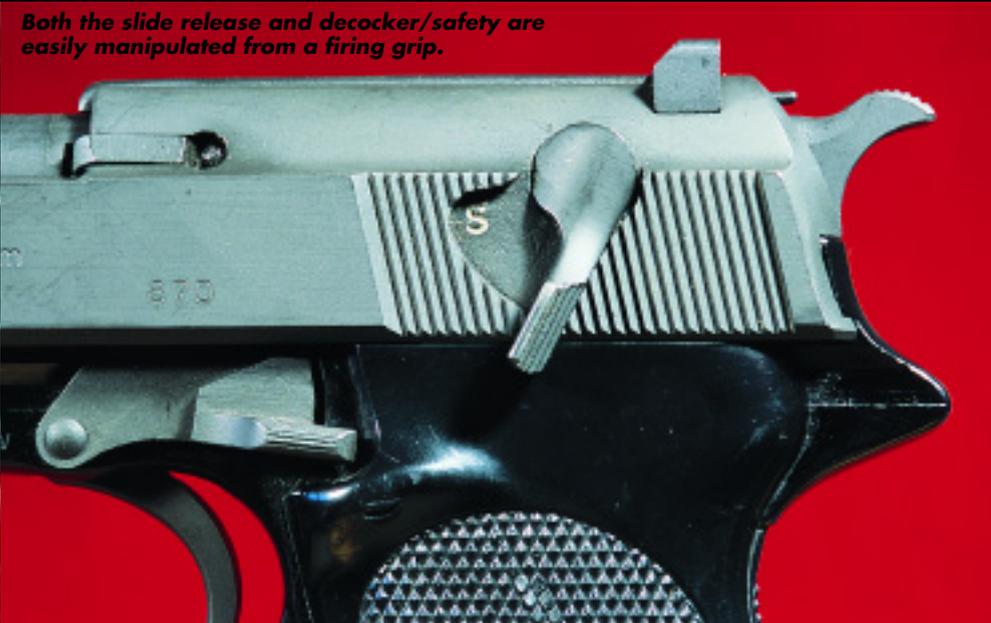


# Walther's P-38

Tough Teutonic  
Technology

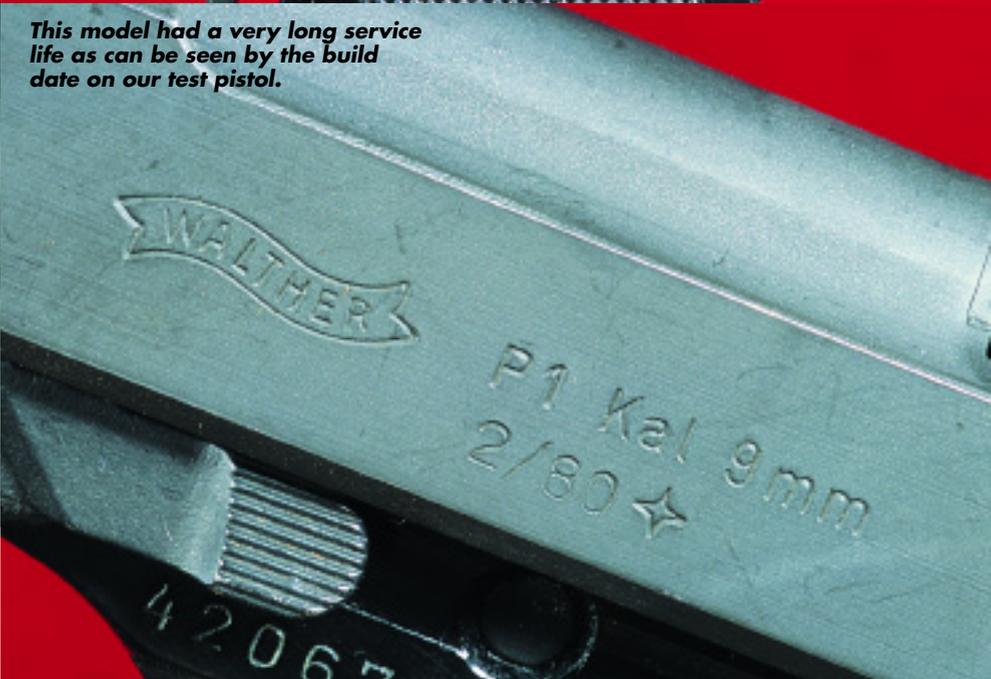
David M. Fortier • Photography By Emily K. Fortier

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • MAY/JUNE 2003



*Both the slide release and decocker/safety are easily manipulated from a firing grip.*

*This model had a very long service life as can be seen by the build date on our test pistol.*



**W**alther's P38 has led a surprisingly long life. My first introduction to this famous pistol came as a mere child via my step-father's gun collection. A veteran of World War II he, like many others, had brought a few items home from the war. One of these was a well-worn P38 he had acquired in an unenviable fashion. A bear of a man, he had survived having his landing craft sunk only to later find himself engaged in a desperate hand to hand struggle with a German infantryman. He prevailed, thanks to his 1911, and after killing his antagonist he took the man's Walther. Fair is fair.

While the Thousand-Year Reich that P38 had been forged to protect didn't survive, Walther's design did. Having proven itself in actual combat it was adopted, in slightly modified form, by West Germany's Post-war Bundeswehr as the P1. Walther's design subsequently served several generations of Teutonic

soldiers as well as faced-down the hungry Russian Bear throughout the Cold War years. Today Walther's P1 has finally hit the surplus market, replaced by more modern designs. Available in excellent to new condition at surprisingly reasonable prices, they're a superb buy for anyone in the market for a high quality, but inexpensive, 9mm pistol.

Carl Walther Waffenfabrik began producing handguns in Zella-Mellis in 1908. They're probably best known for their enormously popular pocket pistols, the PP-Polizei Pistole introduced in 1929 and its smaller sibling — the PPK-Polizei Pistole Kriminalbeamte — introduced in 1930. When the Wehrmacht began looking for a replacement for its difficult-to-manufacture P.08 Parabellum (Luger) in the early 1930's, Walther was one of the companies that

responded. They developed a number of models (all failed to satisfy the German ordnance officials) before their AP (Armee Pistole) was refined and adopted as the Pistole 38.

### **Double Action Iron**

The result of their labor is a sinister looking full-sized double-action 9x19 pistol with a 4.9" barrel. It stands out from the crowd due to its unique locking system, which was quite different from the familiar Browning design at the time.

Walther used a locking wedge under the barrel, which held the slide and barrel together during a short recoil. The wedge was then driven down by striking against a frame transom. This released the slide to run back and complete the reloading cycle. The proven double action lock of the PP was also refined and included in



The P1 was tested with a wide assortment of 9x19 FMJ, JHP, and specialty loads. Accuracy ran from merely service grade to surprisingly good.

The P1's lock-up consists of a wedge that rises to lock into cutouts in the slide.



the new design. Feed was from a single stack 8-round magazine.

The controls consist of a decocker/safety mounted on the left side of the slide, a slide release on the left side of the frame, and a magazine catch located on the heel of the butt. Military production got under way in 1939 with the first issues being made to Panzer crews. While substantially different in concept and design than Browning's legendary M1911 or FN's P-35, Walther's P38 none-the-less performed well.

During the war over one million P-38s were produced by Walther, Mauser-Werke (starting in 1941), and Spreewerke GmbH (starting in 1943). However, there were never enough available and the P38 never did totally replace the older P08 in German service. With the fall of Berlin in 1945, the P38's time with the Wehrmacht came to an abrupt end. Walther's factory at Zella-Mehlis in Thuringia was captured by the U.S. Army and then turned over to the Soviets in June, 1945. However the German management team managed to

escape the Soviet's grasp. They still held various patents covering the PP and PPK pistols and so to rebuild their company, they licensed their manufacture to Manurhin of France.

### From the Ashes

Walther used the money gained from Manurhin to establish a new factory in Ulm-an-der-Donau producing mechanical adding machines. Then in 1955, West Germany's sovereignty was fully restored and the Bundeswehr began looking for a suitable service pistol. After evaluating what was available they decided they wanted their battle proven P38 back. So in 1957, Walther returned to the firearms business. They made some slight changes to the wartime P38, replaced the steel frame with a lightweight "Dural" alloy unit and it was subsequently adopted as the Pistole 1. This model served both the Bundeswehr and Austrian Army for decades.

Today this fine old war-horse has finally been put out to pasture. P1's are now widely available at bargain prices.

**The P1 utilizes dual recoil springs mounted in the frame. Feed is from an 8 round single stack magazine.**



My test pistol (from Century Arms) arrived in excellent shape showing only minor storage/handling wear. Dated February 1980, it was accompanied by two 8-round steel magazines (one dated 3/64 and the other 5/76), a black leather military flap holster (dated 9/59), and a typically German cleaning kit (dated 1987).

Out of the box the Walther looked good enough to blitzkrieg across Europe with. It felt good in the hand and while playing with it, I noticed the decocker/safety is easy to manipulate from a firing grip. Simply thumbing it down safely decocks the hammer and places the pistol on Safe. A European pattern magazine release is located on the heel of the weapon's butt. This slows magazine changes and is the only real flaw in Walther's design — if it can be called a flaw.

Unlike many service pistols the P1 has excellent sights. The front sight consists of a large, square post with a white dot and the rear is a large square notch with a white post. This can be adjusted for windage corrections by drifting. The sights are rugged, easy to pick up, and have no sharp edges. Just behind the rear sight and above the hammer is a loaded-chamber indicator.

The Walther is a conventional double-action design, with the first shot

fired in the double-action mode and subsequent shots fired single-action. I noted that the double-action pull was smooth, fairly light, and stacked just before let-off. The single-action pull was light, fairly crisp, and possessed little over-travel. Stripping the P1 (a very simple task) revealed no problems so we headed to the range.

### **Shootin' Der Pistole**

I used 8 different loads ranging in bullet weight from 65 to 147 grains, all shot off sand bags. These included basic FMJ loadings as well as JHP, Match, and specialty loads.

Off the bench, groups ranged from serviceable to quite impressive, depending upon the load. The good sights and decent trigger were a definite aid during accuracy work. Magazines loaded without effort, locked securely into place, and rounds fed smoothly. Ejection was positive, although the P1 would occasionally bounce a hot empty off the shooter's forehead. This did little to endear it to me. However the pistol

*Continued on page 115*

**Like many European service pistols the P1 uses a magazine release located on the weapon's heel. This slows reloads.**



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Mike Cumpston

# JUST DO IT

**I**n the late 1850s Smith and Wesson applied the White patent to a top-hinged, break open cartridge revolver chambered for the Model 1 Cartridge. This was your basic black powder .22 Short, which was kind of a magnum version of the rimfire gallery caps then enjoying some popularity in Europe.

The improved Second Issue came out in the spring of 1860, just in time for Samuel Langhorne Clements to narrowly miss becoming history's first technical gun writer. Sam couldn't find an editor who would look at his copy and finally had to write a book to get it published. Too bad *Handgunner* wasn't around. Just think about having Sam Clements write a gun article for you.

"Roughing It" described his stage coach trip to the Nevada territory and contains his impressions of the S&W seven shooter he carried in his pocket; He remarked the revolver held seven car-

tridges with bullets "About the same size as a homeopathic pill" and added that the full gun-load seemed to constitute the recommended adult dose. Assuredly, a black powder .22 Short bullet could be expected to lead to the same species of slow and agonizing death as many of the medical remedies of the day.

A naturalist by inclination, Sam was given to fulsome descriptions of the flora and fauna he encountered in his travels. "There dwells in these parts a creature

called a jackass rabbit." And, like most early naturalists from Audubon to Darwin to Roosevelt, his first reaction to a new species of animal life was to take a shot at it, and this he did with his handy pocket Smith. Languid though it seemed at rest, the Jackass Rabbit dopplered away at impressive speed when Twain touched off the Model 1. "Long after he was out of sight, you could still here him whizzz." (Mark Twain, *Roughing It*)

The Model 1 was, of course, not the first firearm put out by Smith & Wesson, but it was the first to employ the self-contained cartridge in a front-to-back bored cylinder. The Second Issue ran from 1860-68 with a total production run, as estimated by Roy Jinks, at a bit more than 115,400. This is a lot of revolvers when you consider that the factories depended upon hand labor and water wheel powered machinery — and when you consider that Bellisiles tells us that nobody had guns

*Continued on page 84*



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## STEEL CHALLENGE

*Continued from page 56*

In the "Springfield Armory" Limited category, Rob Leatham also held off a strong challenge from Para's Todd Jarrett and Smith & Wesson's Jerry Miculek. In this category, the guns and holsters are "highly modified and high tech" but without the compensators and optical sights found on the "open" guns.

Many women found steel speed shooting to be a place for them to excel and enjoy the thrill of beating the guys. In the final standings, Athena Lee of the Philippines took the ADCO/Diamond Shotgun woman's division with a score of 85.63. Athena held-off the second and third place charges of previous women's Steel Challenge champions, Cathy Levanza and Julie Goloski.

### Room For Everybody

Stock guns have a home at the Steel Challenge in the I.D.P.A. and the Smith & Wesson Iron Sight Revolver categories. Dave Sevigny won the Glock I.D.P.A. Stock Service Division using, appropriately, his Glock. I shot well enough to win Brownells I.D.P.A. Custom Defensive Pistol Division using my Les Baer Premium II. The Heckler & Koch I.D.P.A. Enhanced Service Division was won by Matt Burkett who shot brilliantly with his Infinity .40 caliber pistol. Jason Pettitt repeated as the Smith & Wesson Iron Sight Revolver category champion in 2002.

The Cowboy Single Action top guns came and enjoyed the match. It is really great to see them showing their single actions to the best automatic speed shooters. It's very impressive to see them "thumb" their pistols so fast and accurately. Ken Kupsch "Canada Kid" bested the field of single action shooters with Donna Parker "Lusty Lil" winning the Women's Single Action title.

Rimfire too! Marvel Products sponsored the Rimfire Match held on opening day. When the smoke had cleared and the ranges were silent, Todd Jarrett had taken the optic title and Jason Pettitt the iron sight. This event doesn't require a holster and is designed as an entry-level event to make it easier to become involved in steel speed shooting.

### Going Out With a Bang

The grand finale of the Steel Challenge is the Vihtavouri/Lapua "Shootoff". Only the top 32 shooters in the overall competition qualify for the final days shooting. The top 32 shooters are paired into teams that compete on mirror image setups of targets. The teams then step up to the firing line and put on a show for all to enjoy.

Each team must knock down their ten targets, ranging in distance from 10 to 25 yards and include 8" round targets at 20 yards. Strategy between the team

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members is crucial because the falling targets must be hit before engaging the final 12" stop target. If the stop target is struck before all mandatory targets are hit, then the "bout" is forfeited to the opposing team. For a team to be eliminated, they must lose three out of five bouts in the finals.

The action is fast and furious as the air is filled with brass, smoke and excitement, as the struck steel rings and falls creating an audible and visual spectacle for the crowd. Times are recorded as low as 3½ seconds for the fastest teams. In the end, the team of Rob Leatham and Tet-suya Sakai were victorious. It's a great show for everyone.

**Many women found steel speed shooting to be a place for them to excel and enjoy the thrill of beating the guys.**

Another interesting phenomenon occurred at the 2002 Steel Challenge that became apparent as the match progressed. The shooters had reached a new level of skill not seen before in such a number of competitors. On the "Blade-Tech Roundabout" stage and the "Bar-Sto Precision Showdown", both have five round targets placed in a narrow field of fire and times were recorded as low as 2.2 seconds.

Due to the nearness of the targets and short movement of the gun on these two stages, the times were extremely fast among the top shooters and gave the spectators an astounding display of speed and accuracy. They were hitting the targets so fast that the match officials were having difficulty seeing that the targets were struck. In some cases, the competitor's gun had fired and while the official was watching for the hit, the competitor was already hitting another target. At the 2003 tournament, another range official will be added just to watch and insure that all targets are struck without question.

The 2002 Steel Challenge was a great event enjoyed by many. It continues to be refined and tuned to meet the demands of the industry, the shooters, the media and the spectators. The Steel Challenge is a project that Mike and I hope never to finish. We will do our best to work with all concerned to make it better every year. So, come on out and enjoy the fun and excitement of steel speed shooting.

For more information on Steel Challenge contact, Mike Dalton, phone/fax 818-892-2188; mdalton@isishootists.com. For complete 2002 match results visit [www.steelchallenge.com](http://www.steelchallenge.com)

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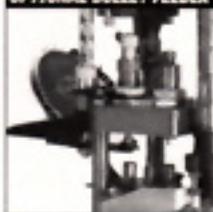
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## 10-RING

Continued from page 46

looked at the computer and asked if they could transfer 350 million crowns — about \$37.2 million US — of government money into his personal bank account. Gee, they'd be happy to, they explained, but they would need his bank routing and account numbers. Wheels turned and gears ground while he thought that one over. Then he laboriously scribbled out the numbers for them. He left, probably thinkin', "Wow, what a great day! I'll never have to worry about food, shelter, stuff like that again!" And he won't. He was klapped in zer handcuffs in short order, of course. If this happened in the US, he might have grounds for a privacy-of-information lawsuit. In Sweden — and knowin' something about Swedish prisons — well, we hope he packed his Long Johns.

## ANY GOOD RANGEMASTER COULDA TOLD 'EM

No matter how old that smoke-pole is, or how long it's been stored, it ain't unloaded until you've checked it, and checked it again. A salvage worker in a steel yard in Kiev, the Ukraine, learned that lesson the hard way.

When the Soviet Union collapsed and the Red Army pulled outta' the Ukraine, amongst their left-behinds were hundreds of old surplus field cannon and howitzers, mostly dating back to the late '30s and early '40s. The new government of the post-Soviet Ukraine didn't have any use for 'em, but they could sure use the scrap iron and steel — you just have to cut 'em up first. That's what the worker was doing, perched on the barrel of a massive WWII howitzer, slashing the breech with a cutting torch, when he heard — and felt — The Big Boom. When he woke up a minute later, he'd been swatted like a fly against the shop building wall, and his pals were patting out the little smoldering fires in his hair, moustache and eyebrows. He asked what happened, and they just pointed to the big new hole in the shop roof. They might have talked, too, but he couldn't hear them.

Yep, there was a round in the chamber of that monster, and the heat of his torch cooked it off. First the foreman was just happy the barrel had been elevated rather than pointing horizontally across the shop. Then it occurred to him — where did that round go? Fortunately, it only traveled about 800 yards, and didn't explode on impact when it came down through the roof of an empty warehouse. Now an ex-Red Army cannon-cocker inspects every cannon before it's cleared for cutting.

## HOW'D THEY SPOT US? WE WAS HIDIN' REAL GOOD

Every crook ought to know that your getaway ride should be as plain-Jane as possible, then you dump that sucker quick. Feds and local cops in Martinsburg, W. Va., figured they were running against the clock after a bank robbery in which the female suspect scooted off in a fire-engine red Jeep Wrangler. Could they find it, and possibly her, before she dumped that distinctive ride? No sweat, it turned out. The day after the heist, officers found the crimson Jeep sitting in the suspect's front yard in town, with a big "For Sale" sign on it. Then they went and knocked on her door with the message, "Fast, lady, but not fast enough, not smart enough."

Then we have two mental midgets in Edwardsville, Pa., who first stole a big refrigerator-white car, possibly for a getaway ride, but then decided white ain't such a cool color for a crime spree. Trouble was, where to do the paint job? We guess there weren't too many size XL white sedans stolen in Edwardsville at that moment, so cops couldn't help noticing two guys madly slappin' a coat of black paint on The White Whale in the middle of a shopping center parking lot on the main street. We might only catch the stupid ones, but there sure are a lot of 'em!

## I THINK WE GOT THE WRONG VAN, MAN

Yeah, we think you did, too. Responding to a series of vehicle break-ins at railroad commuter parking areas, transit cops on Chicago's South Shore staked out some lots, one with a cop hiding inside a van. Early in the surveillance, Officer Jesse Watts Jr. watched as a couple of thugs arrived and began peeping in car windows and trying doors. He thought it was gonna be a long dash from the van to confront them if they broke into one, but luck ran his way — sorta. The two made their way down the line of parked cars until they came to an unlocked door — the sliding side door of Jesse's GangBustersMobile.

It's hard to tell who was more surprised, but we'll bet it was Robinson Morales, 25, and Fiore Petrassi, 20. They were lookin' in to check for valuables when suddenly the door was filled with one large, loud, ticked-off cop with a gun in his hand. Following a professional conversation regarding rights-to-silence and such, Jesse and his pals removed a load of stolen stereo gear and burglary tools from Morales' car. These guys are gonna have nightmares about sliding doors for a while.



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**JUST DO IT**

Continued from page 78

back then anyway. Of course, he's been pretty much hooted-out of the halls of academia and proven a fake anyway, so there. The highest production levels occurred during the Civil War and many a Union Combatant bought the revolver for serious use. Dealer Cost, by the way, was \$10.50. Features include single action operation, a spur trigger, vestigial sights and a nifty ejector system lying along the bottom of the barrel disguised as a cylinder base pin. With the revolver broken open, the cylinder comes out for loading and you can punch out the empties using the above feature.

**Yeah ... We Shot It**

Number 81064 of the Second Issue is a fetching example of the Model 1. The number places it at about the middle of the production run — possibly manufactured during the Civil War. The action is sound and the bore and chambers appear to be in new condition. It even retains a bit of finish. It is a nifty ten ounce piece of well-executed engineering. Shooting even such a well-preserved artifact from the middle of the 19th Century is ill-advised and hazardous on several levels. It was, after all, designed around a black powder cartridge of negligible pressure. We knew immediately that it was the Right Thing To Do, in our inimitable Handgunner-esc way of thinking.

Developing second thoughts about using CCI Min-cap rounds, my buddy Leo dug around and came up with a box of Eley Conical Bullet Caps almost half the age of the revolver itself, and substantially punier than even the CCI Caps. I set up an old copy of the Numrich Arms catalogue in the back room, checked my shooting glasses, backed up about ten feet and cut loose. Several rounds clobbered the Shoot-N-See target about 5" above point of aim giving some indication as to why the creator of Huck Finn had missed that Jack Rabbit over 140 years before. In spite of emphatic firing pin dints on the cartridge rims, I got a couple of misfires from the elderly CB Caps and one bullet struck the target sideways before bouncing back and smacking into my leg. One chamber came up out of sync with the barrel lodging a mutilated Eley bullet in the front of the chamber. In summation — a successful and informative shooting experience with the oldest handgun the shooter has yet fired.

The Model 1 and its several variations launched the era of the cartridge revolver at a time when designers were still seriously working to improve the percussion handguns then in general use. It was, and is, a testament to the rapid pace of firearms development in the latter half of the 19th Century.



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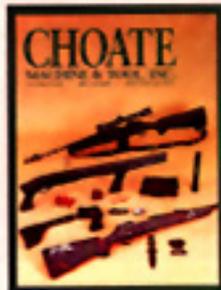
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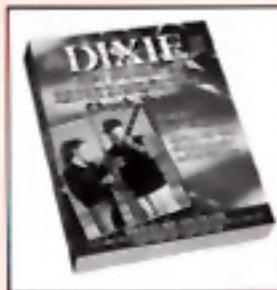
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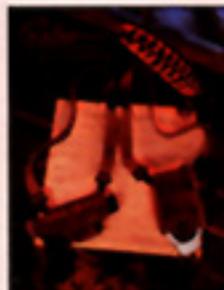
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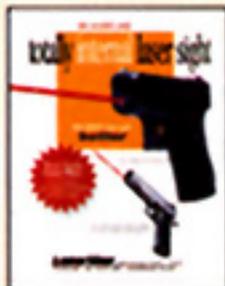
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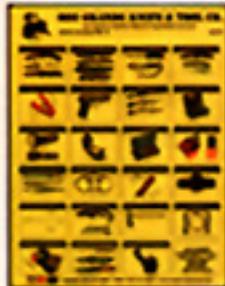
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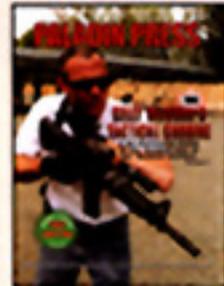
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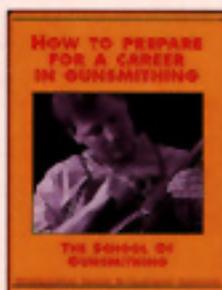
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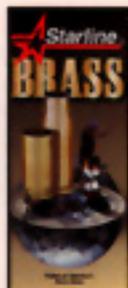
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CATALOG INQUIRY #71

## AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 30

Gary had hoped that he would never need these guns. But this morning, he would be glad he put them in place.

It's a quarter past ten AM, fifteen minutes after opening, when the two men rush through the door wearing ski masks. One is physically huge, pulling along a wheeled suitcase with one hand and wielding what Gary recognizes as a blue steel Army .45 automatic in the other. The second, average-sized, stands a few steps inside the doorway with a sawed-off shotgun. "You don't believe it's happening," Gary will say in a guest lecture to one of my LFI classes later. "It takes a few moments for the reality to sink in." The one with the pistol is rapidly moving up the aisle toward him, screaming, "We're here to clean you out!" The man with the shotgun fires a blast into a display case, and the employee behind that counter dives to the floor.

The reality has sunk in. Gary Baker's hand closes over the rubbery stock of a Rossi .38.

The fight is on.

### War On Two Fronts

Massively muscled from years of pumping iron in prison, Thomas Salter easily leaps to the top of the four-foot counter at the left rear of the store as it faces the street. Directly ahead of him and slightly above is Gary Baker, who simply raises his right arm to eye level, directs the .38 at the masked giant's chest, and fires three fast shots. Within a heartbeat Gary's younger brother Charlie has also seized a Rossi .38 and, firing in the exact same stance, pumps three more shots at Salter from the criminal's left side.

The big ex-con pitches forward and falls behind the counter. He sprawls next to a female employee who has already hit the floor, with a Rossi .38 in one of her hands and her other hand stabbing at the holdup button, the silent alarm. She brings the gun to bear on the fallen gunman to protect herself, his masked face inches away from hers, but she realizes that he is not moving and holds her fire.

Meanwhile, on the other end of the store at the public's entrance, the second half of the armed robbery problem remains to be solved. Pappy Head points his sawed-off down the aisle at Gary and cuts loose. His wide-spreading swath of double ought buckshot goes wild.

But not the storeowner's return shots. The distance is some 40 feet and now Gary Baker takes careful aim, aligning the tiny sights of the revolver, and rolls off the last two shots in the cylinder. Pappy Head ducks behind a solid corner at the store's center island, a square of four showcases, and screams, "I'm hit!"

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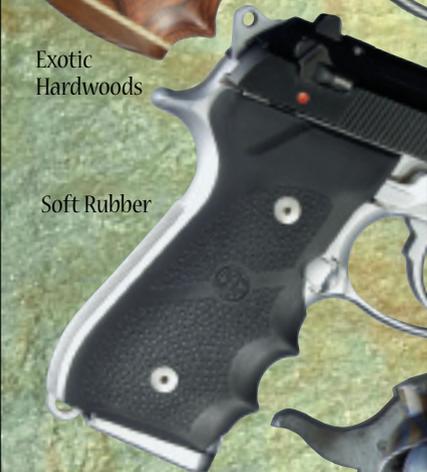
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Charlie Baker fires at him, but without effect, and his .38 goes dry. Another employee hands him the big single-action .44. It occurs to Charlie that between the accuracy of its long barrel, adjustable sights and the barricade-penetrating power of its Remington 240 grain Magnum semi-jacketed hollow point bullets, this revolver might let him reach the well-covered gunman. He fires four shots.

Nothing has changed. Setting down the Ruger, Charlie seizes the nearest fully-loaded Rossi and moves forward across the back wall behind the counter. He has to step over the prone employee and the downed Salter to do it, and he also crosses his brother's field of fire. Both Bakers are alert enough not to endanger the other.

**For Charlie Baker, fear has already coalesced into a controlled but white-hot anger.**

Gary has dropped the empty .38 and grabbed his Remington 870. Now, as they face the second threat with the shotgun, Charlie is on the left with a .38 extended to arm's length and Gary is above and behind him, to his right, with the shotgun. They have the remaining gunman triangulated. Charlie orders the surviving criminal to surrender and throw his gun out. Head yells back that he's giving up and that he's going to toss out the shotgun. The Baker brothers hope that it's over, that the killing will end here.

But they don't know what a stone killer they're up against. Pappy Head has been trying to lull them off guard, and now he shoves the sawed-off out past his cover and fires at Gary, who can't get a clean shot at him at this angle. Charlie opens fire furiously, his gun extended in a right hand only position, looking over the sights and aligning it on Pappy's position and firing double action as fast as he can pull the trigger, moving down the counter toward the deadly gunman. The gun clicks dry. He snatches up another, empties it, drops it, picks up another, and continues, a relentless drumbeat of gunfire with one Rossi .38 after another as he closes rapidly on the threat. He is trying to stop Head with bullets, and if he can't do that, at least pin him down to where Head can't shoot at his brother anymore.

Pappy Head ducks out and fires another blast, this time at Charlie. The younger Baker is ducking down to retrieve a fresh revolver from behind the counter, and this saves his life. He feels and hears the buck-

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shot go past his head. For Charlie Baker, fear has already coalesced into a controlled but white-hot anger. He picks up this next .38 and pumps more lead at the man who has tried to murder both him and his brother, still running forward toward the danger, closing the gap, trying to get an angle on Head where he can deliver a stopping shot.

no time to take chances. He shoots Pappy Head, now that he has advanced forward enough to have a clear target, and shoots him again. The masked man with the shotgun is now lying very still.

Charlie grabs a fresh revolver and covers Pappy. Gary shucks an empty shell out of the 870 and chambers another round of buckshot. He moves forward.

## Thomas Salter has moved. The employee has done as instructed. Salter isn't moving any longer.

Meanwhile, Gary Baker can see the shotgun blast directed at his brother, and the Remington 870 is already at his shoulder, and now that Pappy has raised his gun above the counter to aim at Charlie, Gary has a clear shot at him at last. Sighting carefully down the barrel, he squeezes the trigger. The gunman's head and shoulders disappear, and Gary pumps two more loads of double ought at the same place, just hoping to keep him down and prevent him from shooting Charlie.

But, from his position on the side, the advancing younger brother has seen what Gary could not. He has seen the buckshot hit the gunman in the head, seen him go down. But is he down in a prone shooting position and only wounded, playing possum again? Charlie can't tell, and it's

Stepping past the downed Salter, he is struck by the man's imposing size. "My God," he thinks, "one of his legs is bigger than both of mine." Another employee is beside him with the Super Blackhawk, which still holds two live rounds. "Cover him," Gary snaps. "Shoot him if he moves." Gary advances down the aisle toward Head's position. Behind him, he hears a very loud gunshot.

Thomas Salter has moved. The employee has done as instructed. Salter isn't moving any longer.

Now Gary and Charlie are both above Pappy Head, covering him. There had been almost no blood visible on the first gunman, but this one's masked face lies in a crimson puddle. They can see that it's over.



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The response to the Holdup Buttons has been swift. The first Henrico officer to enter the store takes in the scene, a masked man with a sawed-off dead, almost at his feet and a man in a suit and tie standing over him with a Remington 870 similar to the one the officer himself is issued. The cop says softly, laconically, "It looks as if you have things under control."

Gary Baker is shocked at the words, but pleasantly so. He has heard horror stories about armed citizens being crucified for defending themselves. He asks, "Do you want to take my gun?" The cop shrugs and replies, "If you want." Gary hands him the Remington, and steps outside into the cool fresh air. He has a sudden, desperate urge for a cigarette.

### Short Term Aftermath

Thomas Salter and William Head were pronounced dead of multiple gunshot wounds at the scene. The criminal justice system instantly recognized the shooting as a justifiable homicide. No civil lawsuits were ever filed in the matter.

Toward the end of the shootout, Gary Baker noted his left hand was bleeding. He had been hit by a stray buckshot pellet from Head's sawed-off, which he believes may have been a ricochet. The laceration was treated at the scene by a responding paramedic, who told Gary he would need to get to the emergency room for treatment. He never got around to it, and the minor injury healed uneventfully.

Altered perceptions such as auditory muting and altered perceptions of time are experienced by a majority of gunfight survivors, and that was true here. Gary remembers hearing the gunshots but not being bothered by their loudness, and one of his strongest memories is the eerie silence between shots in the high-volume firefight. Charlie tells me he was aware of the gunfire, but also aware it seemed muted and that his ears did not ring after it was over. Gary said the gunfight felt as if it lasted at least two minutes, while Charlie perceived it to have happened very quickly, probably thirty and no more than forty seconds from first shot to last.

The exact count of the gunshots fired is unclear, but it is well over thirty. Greater Richmond is a high crime area, and the police see no need to waste limited resources gathering artifacts from closed cases. Having quickly determined the only crimes at this shooting scene were armed robbery, aggravated assault, and attempted murder by Head and Salter, and that these crimes were cleared by their deaths, authorities swiftly closed the case. Evidence became simply artifacts. There was no need for an official, detailed reconstruction.

Multiple showcases were shattered in the exchange of gunfire, as was frontal window glass. No innocent persons were harmed by any of the shots, save for Gary Baker's minor hand laceration

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from one of Head's buckshot pellets, though two unoccupied cars parked outside were hit. The store was a crime scene that belonged to the police until mid-afternoon. Workmen stayed until two AM the next day replacing broken glass and squaring away blood-soaked carpeting. After re-entering, Gary noticed white powder all over everything. It took him a while to realize that it wasn't fingerprint powder, but dust from the suspended ceiling that had been knocked loose by the concussion of the intense gunfire. The following morning, Beverly Hills Jewelers was open for business as usual.

**“The police gently explained to him that shooting a violent, armed criminal when he makes a movement consistent with going for a gun is not a crime.”**

Experts in “post shooting trauma” tell us that after even the most righteous shooting, we can expect periods of sleeplessness and also the “Mark of Cain Syndrome,” a sociological phenomenon in which your having killed someone becomes the defining thing about you as you are seen by others. Gary spent a sleepless night on his front porch, protecting his family with a .357 Magnum in his lap, because by now he had learned the men he and his brother had killed belonged to the Dixie Mafia. It took him a while to be convinced that unlike the real Mafia, these gang members cared only about themselves. Like Pappy Head, they were more likely to murder one another than they were to hunt down someone who had killed one of their own in self-defense. Eventually, the brothers learned to rest easy. There were no reprisals.

Much media attention came their way, and the Bakers became reluctant celebrities. Neither of the brothers welcomed it. Charlie avoided it studiously — to the best of my knowledge, his interview with me was the first time he has told his perspective of the incident to a writer. Gary felt that having guns had saved the lives of himself, his brother, and his staff, and that he owed a duty to talk about the importance of the right to bear arms. He has since been written up in many venues and discussed the matter on TV and radio.

The employee who shot the downed Thomas Salter with the .44 Magnum

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when he moved will not be named here. Within 24 hours of the shooting, he called police to "confess" that he had shot a helpless man in the back. The police gently explained to him that shooting a violent, armed criminal when he makes a movement consistent with going for a gun is not a crime. Salter was lying on his .45 the entire time. The Baker brothers did not know that Salter had been carrying a second gun until a friend among the authorities told Charlie it had been discovered on his person when the corpse was undressed. Autopsy reportedly indicated that Salter was already dead when the .44 slug hit him, and that the movement the employee saw was almost certainly a post-agonal response ("death throes," in lay terminology), but in any case, he did no wrong in firing under the circumstances.

When I toured the shootout scene in September 2002, I was struck by the fact that bullet damage was still evident in the store. Discreet surveillance camcorders are now in place, but no video exists of the shootout. The brothers differ in their feelings about this. Gary says, "It's just as well. I wouldn't want my wife to see a videotape of me shooting a human being, and, if the outcome had gone the other way, I certainly wouldn't have wanted her to ever have to look at that." Charlie says, "If it had been captured on videotape, it would probably be useful for training people and waking people up. Frankly, I've never seen anything like it."

## Long Term Aftermath

The Baker brothers are in their early fifties now. They hope there will be no repeat of this incident, but they don't take chances. There are even more guns in the store than before. Gary keeps a long barreled Dan Wesson .357 Magnum on his desk and carries a Smith & Wesson in the same caliber. He wasn't impressed with the number of .38 Special rounds it took to drop big Tom Salter.

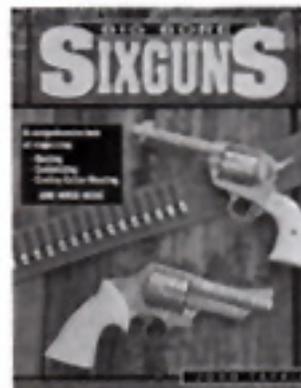
Charlie Baker can't remember how many revolvers he went through in the gunfight. He sequentially fired at least five and possibly six Rossi .38s in the shootout, plus the .44 Magnum. Most were run dry, but he fired only four rounds from the .44 and only four from at least one of the Rossis. Charlie now owns a higher capacity 9mm auto that is often within his reach.

The incident made national news, and the papers made it sound as if every single employee had opened fire on the robbers. In fact, of the six or seven personnel counting the owner, only the Baker brothers actively engaged in the gunfight, with one employee firing one shot in the immediate aftermath. However, all but one employee did at least draw a gun during the incident.

There have been no further attempted robberies at Beverly Hills Jewelers.



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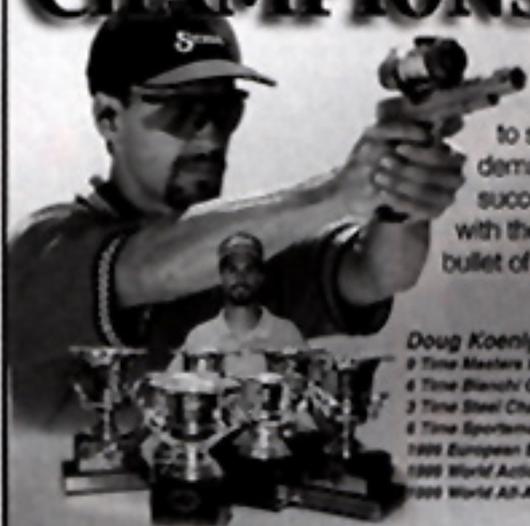
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## REALITY CHECK

Continued from page 24

defending yourself with firearms or, for that matter, any tool, requires practice. The level of skill required to win cannot be drummed-up at a moment's notice in the middle of a fight. If other humans are attacking your husband and or children, the skills required must be onboard before the fight starts.

## Would I like her to defend me/us with my old hand-me-down pistol that works most of the time?

This brings up the selection of which handgun to buy. I don't care, but a handgun is supposed to be comforting in a fight — not comfortable to carry. You may have to alter your dress or lifestyle to accommodate your ability to defend yourself or your family. You will most likely fight at arms length with your choice — and your life will depend on your choice — both in effectiveness and function. Handguns are not supposed to be cute. Puppies are cute. Handguns are supposed to stop a fight. Possession of a handgun does not equate to competency. I hear "I have owned a handgun all my life." So you know, I have a grand piano in my living room and I am not a concert pianist.

So then the scenario is, I'm attacked in the parking lot at the Wonder-Mart. I am on the ground and being kicked in the face and ribs by multiple assailants. My whatever-handgun comes clear of my retention holster and skids across the parking lot. The woman in my defense hopefully picks up the gun — or maybe takes hers from her place of carry — and shoots the snot out of the bad guys. So do you think she should know how to take off the safety and apply Marksmanship at that point? Would I like her to defend me/us with my old hand-me-down pistol that works most of the time?

The two of you should decide now, before there is blood coming from your mouth, nose and ears as you lay in some parking lot listening to the grunts of three hard-cases as they kick the life out of you, on some cold night in the future.



*Footnote: In all of the descriptions, "man" could replace "woman" and vice-versa. I've seen it both ways.*

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## TAFFIN TESTS

Continued from page 40

Holster that can be worn as a strong side, crossdraw, or shoulder holster. Ringle accomplishes this by incorporating a lightweight adjustable belt into a holster (also of very lightweight leather), with a wide v-shaped back. Recently, Ringle contacted me about making such a rig for a scoped, single-shot pistol. I sent him the tracing of my pet 14" SSK Custom Thompson/Center 6.5 JDJ for the project. Normally this handgun is carried by the use of a sling. With the Wyoming Combination Holster I now have four options, sling, strong side, crossdraw, or shoulder holster. As a matter of practicality with this size sixgun, the shoulder holster option works best.

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There are several holster makers who can provide leather for just about any handgun imaginable. For some reason, though, there are very few who can come up with a properly fitting holster for either the Freedom Arms .454 or the custom five-shot Ruger Bisleys such as those made in .475 and .500 by John Linebaugh. I think most manufacturers use standard Rugers for fitting their holsters and when such holsters are provided with lining they simply will not fit a slightly larger Freedom Arms or the custom guns with larger diameter cylinders and heavier barrels.

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Belts with a full row of cartridge loops look very good but they are also normally very uncomfortable to wear in the hunting field all day. And for what purpose? How many shots are normally taken when hunting? I prefer it to be only one. However, I am not so naïve as to go hunting with only one cartridge. My sixgun will hold four or five rounds, whichever is appropriate, and is backed up by a cartridge slide. Instead of the weight of a full cartridge belt, I often go with five .500, .475, .454, or .45 Colt rounds, or six .44 Magnum rounds, carried on a Ringle cartridge slide. It also fits nicely in a shirt pocket if I should be so inclined.



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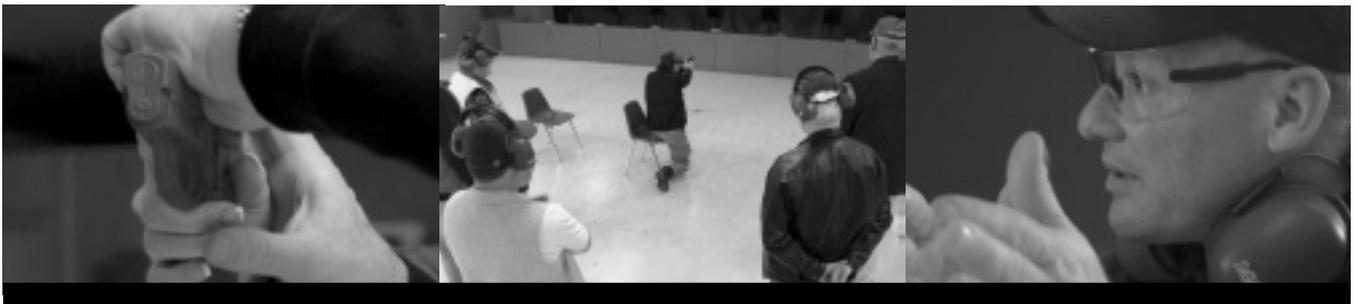
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**MADNESS**

*Continued from page 59*

displace the same amount for each amount of force we add. This is true until the spring passes a certain point called the elastic limit. Robert Hooke discovered this theory back in 1660. Hooke's Law states: "If the applied forces on a body are not too large, the deformations resulting are directly proportional to the forces producing them." Which means, in actual human being language, if we load a spring past its elastic limit, it permanently deforms. It still provides a force against the load but the force is no longer proportional. If this happens, when we unload the spring (such as when we empty a magazine that has been over-loaded) the spring never returns to a state where it can provide the same load for the same amount of displacement.

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When a magazine manufacturer designs a spring, they plan for a pre-load. The spring is already compressed some in the magazine. On the curve below, this would be Point A. The spring compression would be designed to be below the Elastic Limit. When fully compressed, the spring would be at Point B. If the spring is ever compressed past the elastic limit, say to Point C, it won't ever behave the same. Like a recalcitrant lazy Uncle, it will have a lower spring force for each amount of displacement. On the drawing, the spring would now cycle between points D and E. This means that — particularly with the last bullet or two — the force pushing the bullet up would be less and lo-and-behold, a mis-feed might occur.

When somebody stretches your spring to "fix" your magazine, they are trying to get you back on the original curve. They may get pretty close, however, it's unlikely the spring will ever perform to its original design. The elastic limit is now shifted lower and your magazine spring may fail to perform fairly quickly.

Having said all this, if you have a magazine that isn't feeding right, what should you do? First, disassemble the magazine and clean it thoroughly. Then try it with new, factory ammunition in a freshly cleaned gun. This takes away some of the possible causes. If you are still having feed problems, send it back. Even the low cost, after-market magazine manufacturers will fix the problem at no cost to you other than shipping. If it's a magazine from the gun's manufacturer, let them troubleshoot and repair the problem. Otherwise, toss the mag. It's not worth risking your life to save a few bucks. And that's the truth.

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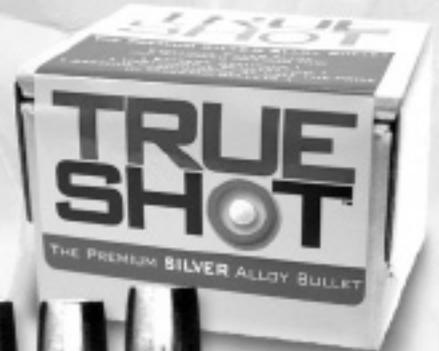


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## SIXGUNNER

*Continued from page 45*

For his part, Morrison installed a Patridge front sight on a ramp base, tuned the action, re-shaped and smoothed the face of the trigger, and re-blued the entire sixgun. This is what one can see and feel. To make everything work, Morrison had to improvise and perform several other operations. Remember he is doing this project without benefit of a parts supply for the old Colt.

The ratchet on the back of the cylinder was worn so Morrison faced it off and set the cylinder back. This required setting the barrel back also and re-setting the barrel/cylinder gap. A new gas ring was installed along with a new mainspring. The hand was too short and the bolt needed to be replaced but neither was available so Morrison stretched and re-shaped the hand, repaired and re-cut the cylinder bolt, and also repaired the rebound lever. It took a lot of doing by someone who knew what he is about, but thanks to Qualite Pistol & Revolver I finally have a good shootin' .44 Special New Service.

It now needs a new set of stocks and I will watch the grip boxes at gun shows and hopefully come across a pair of stag stocks that will fit a New Service. I doubt that any leather maker offers a holster to fit the New Service anymore but it will be a simple task to make one myself. Another .44 Special has now not only been saved from the bone pile but this New Service is ready for a life of new service.

### Heavy .44 Special Loads

While the topic is .44 Specials I will also relate that we have the first factory run of "heavy" .44 Specials. Mike Fletcher has contracted with Buffalo Bore to run a batch of .44 Specials with 255 gr. LBT WFN bullets at a true 1,000 feet per second muzzle velocity. This has been a long time coming.

I have tested these in .44 Special six-guns and a Ruger Super Blackhawk with excellent results. Out of a pair of Colt New Frontiers, both a Second and Third Generation Model with 7½" barrels, they clock out at 1,035 and 1,006 feet per second and shoot into 1½". A Smith & Wesson Model 24 6½" performs with the same accuracy at 1,000 feet per second, while my old three screw Ruger .44 Super Blackhawk keeps the pattern going with the same accuracy at 1,035 feet per second.  Good stuff, indeed.

*For New Service work, or any handgun for that matter, Milt Morrison can be reached at Qualite Pistol & Revolver, (303) 574-1765. Mike Fletcher stands ready to supply your .44 Special ammunition needs at The Gun Room, (918) 382-1501.*

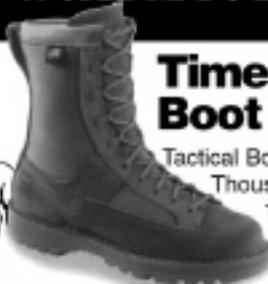
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# TRAIL GUN

Continued from page 51

*perpendicular sharp edges so no reflected light will affect the shooter's aim; they ... must be adjustable to the individual, and, when adjusted, remain unchanged; and, above all, this revolver must be the utmost in reliability and accuracy.*

If you accept the General's definition, the outdoors revolver must meet some fairly high standards. In terms of caliber, at the time, the .38 special revolver was generally considered to be the ultimate. Bear in mind Hatcher's text was written before the .357 Magnum was introduced and in a time when .45 ACP revolvers were not commonly considered well-suited to outdoors use. But times have changed.

Outdoors revolvers today are, for the most part, .357 Magnum caliber. But when confronting dangerous animals, a cartridge is needed that's not only accurate, but one that fires a heavy bullet that will penetrate bone, reach vital organs and create a large permanent wound cavity. While the .357 will usually get the job done, the old adage that a good big bullet is better than a good small bullet is as correct today as it's always been. The relatively slow moving .45 ACP creates a large permanent wound cavity, has sufficient penetration to reach vital organs in most large animals and remains one of the most widely used cartridges in the world. It has been recommended by some authorities as the ideal backwoods cartridge. Some have even made the argument the ideal .45 ACP load for backwoods carry is the 230 gr. FMJ

because it will readily penetrate an animal's heavy skull and enter the brain, immediately putting an end to the situation. At the same time, the 230 gr. bullet has sufficient penetration to also reach vital organs, but it does not create a very large permanent wound cavity.

## Hollow points deliver the largest permanent wound cavity, and that's what it's all about.

So, just perhaps it wouldn't be wise to depend solely upon FMJ loads; hollow point cartridges — in addition to FMJs — would be a good addition to any ammo inventory for the field. Hollow points deliver the largest permanent wound cavity, and that's what it's all about. The notion that temporary wound cavity has any serious wounding effect in any pistol caliber, incidentally, is utter nonsense. It is not our purpose to enter the wound ballistics debate, but the fact is that temporary wound cavity is a factor only in rifle caliber cartridges, as any forensic surgeon will confirm. And that's a fact.

### Boys From Brazil

So, with these kinds of facts in mind, when Taurus set out to design an outdoorsy-handgun, it seems the Boys from Brazil might have begun their effort by reading Hatcher's text and then improving on the good point. Naturally, the Stellar Tracker is a revolver. As

important, it's in .45 ACP — so far, so good. The name of Taurus' latest revolver is hinted at in the "star" pattern of its full moon clip. The clips are not necessary to load and fire the gun, because the cylinder is chambered with a ridge to allow the mouth of the case to seat on it, providing proper headspace. But, when the clips are not used, the ejector will not extract and eject the spent casings, so clips are almost mandatory in this or any revolver that uses rimless cartridges. Basically, having clips makes reloads much faster and life easier.

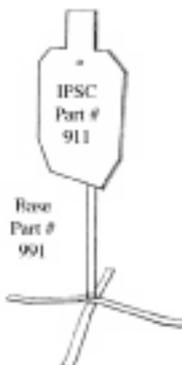
The Stellar Tracker has adjustable sights and the barrel has a full underlug for balance and is even ported, if you like that sort of thing. The Tracker is also a real lightweight, tipping the scales at only 23 ounces. That's a nifty light-as-air number and makes field carry a dream. Another attractive feature is its svelte dimensions. This is without doubt the most compact .45 ACP revolver I've ever seen. Part of the small size is attributable to the fact Taurus made the revolver a five-shooter, rather than the traditional six-shooter. This enabled the size of the cylinder to be reduced to the point the Stellar Tracker can be built on a medium revolver frame, rather than a large frame. Taurus, incidentally, refers to this frame as a "compact frame," despite the fact that it's midway between their small framed and large framed revolvers. The Tracker is no larger or heavier than one of the company's .357 Magnum or .38 Special six shot revolvers.

In consonance with Hatcher's original criteria, the Stellar Tracker has an average double action trigger pull of nine pounds and a single action pull that averaged 4.5 pounds. The double action pull was butter smooth without a hint of "stacking" and

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broke with a crisp snap. The single action pull had no creep whatsoever, broke like the proverbial glass rod, but with slight overtravel, which was no big deal.

The sights are conventional, with a front blade mounted atop a boss on the barrel. The front sight ramp is serrated to reduce glare and has an orange insert for those of us intimately familiar with the delights of bifocals. The Stellar Tracker's target-type rear sight is fully adjustable for both windage and elevation, with tactile and audible clicks. The rear sight notch is square with a thin white line surrounding the sides and bottom. All in all, we give the Stellar Tracker's sights high marks.

### Ribbed for Pleasure

Perhaps the most remarkable part of the Stellar Tracker is its grip, which is unusual in appearance, being made up of flexible ribs that are deepest on the front of the grip. Taurus' proprietary name for these remarkable grips is "Ribber Grips." We find this design so ingenious and so good we have to wonder why Taurus doesn't put them on all the company's revolvers. What the ribs do are accommodate the hands of any size shooter, from small to large. The consistency is just right to conform to the shooter's fingers as they wrap around the grip, essentially fitting the grip to the shooter's hand in a way that no contoured grip can ever match. Another feature of the Ribber Grips is they are unaffected by sweaty or wet hands. The revolver stays put when the shooter grasps it. Imagine that. A third benefit of the Ribber Grips is they help cushion the .45's recoil. Too cool.

A final feature that will find favor

with those having children or simply people who wish to secure their handgun is Taurus' integral lock. Taurus pioneered this feature several years ago and is only now being introduced by other firearm manufacturers. The Taurus revolver system consists of a small steel cylinder mounted in the hammer with a hexagonal post that, when turned clockwise elevates the cylinder above the surface of the revolver's hammer, blocking the firearm from being cocked. If one favors gun locks, a system like Taurus' that is integral and unobtrusive is best. It's present at all times, but totally unobtrusive. All Taurus locks use an identical key, and two keys are provided with each firearm.

**The double action pull was butter smooth without a hint of "stacking" and broke with a crisp snap.**

Almost concurrent with the announcement of the Stellar Tracker was Taurus' introduction of its new .45 ACP "Hex" ammunition. This is a new design incorporating a 185 gr. solid copper hollow point bullet Taurus claims will expand to nearly an inch, with no loss of weight. The development of this new round was the result of a cooperative effort between Taurus, Hodgdon Powder, Barnes Bullets, and Eldorado

Cartridge Company (PMC). The new Taurus cartridges are not only effective, but also non-polluting. We evaluated this ammunition, along with cartridges from Black Hills, Winchester and Wolf

### And It Shoots?

Shooting the Stellar Tracker was a pleasant experience. We accomplished our accuracy testing at 15 yards because, simply put, that's a realistic range for an outdoors revolver like this one. In the real world, shorter distances are the norm and you'll more than likely be standing, anyway. The Ribber grips are really effective in controlling the recoil and the ported barrel aids in keeping muzzle rise to a minimum. It's certainly loud, though, so wear plenty of ear protection. After we finished our formal accuracy testing and chronographing, we had some shooting fun with the Tracker, knocking over bowling pins at distances from 15 to 25 yards. It's a great wheelgun for goofing-off, besides the fact it's a respectable trailgun. Accuracy was excellent all-around.

Our sole complaint regarding the Tracker is there is no holster specifically designed for it yet. Any holster made for a medium-framed revolver would probably work, but we wanted something more, so we took the Stellar Tracker to Chris Stewart in Decatur, Alabama. Chris' company — Ready Tactical Products — produces high quality Kydex holsters and accessories, such as magazine holders, at very competitive prices. Chris had a Kydex holster made for the Stellar Tracker within a few days and, like all Ready Tactical holsters, it proved a snug fit and had adjustable tension. We chose a belt clip, but all Ready Tactical holsters are also available as paddles, with a proprietary retention mechanism that positively prevents the holster from coming out along with the handgun. Oops.

All in all, we like Taurus' Stellar Tracker. The revolver is the first in a series of Taurus revolvers chambered for rimless cartridges and others will soon follow. If the Stellar Tracker is any indication, Taurus has hit yet another home run. The Stellar Tracker is specifically designed as an "outdoors gun," but this shouldn't limit your opinion about it. For those who own a .45 ACP semiauto and would like a revolver in the same caliber, the Stellar Tracker is the only .45 ACP revolver currently available. In the end, if you're seeking a lightweight, powerful, accurate and reliable revolver, Taurus' Stellar Tracker is well worth a serious look.



For more information contact, Taurus International Manufacturing, (800) 327-3776, [www.taurususa.com](http://www.taurususa.com); Ready Tactical Products, (256) 350-4247, e-mail: [const@bellsouth.net](mailto:const@bellsouth.net)

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## SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 18

more — passed it along. But, if I can revisit it on the computer, well, there you go. And Clint Smith? A refreshing voice concerning a topic usually filled with BS.

Tommy Cronan  
Via e-mail

*We'll give the forum a serious look. Ayoob's book of a compilation of The Ayoob Files is available from The Police Bookshelf, (800) 624-9049; www.ayoob.com. Editor*

### Even Romanians Like Us

Esteemed And Honorable Editorial Staff, I write you for the second time (and hopefully not the last), telling you I actually received your parcel, for which I thank you from all my heart. Indeed you have proven to me you are the most kind, polite and honorable foreign people I have ever come into contact with. Just now, before the holidays, you offered me the greatest gift of my life.

I end this short letter thanking you again, very much. Warm thanks to Mr. Roy Huntington for his nice words, which mean a lot to me. I really appreciate this because, after all, it is the gesture that counts.

Thank you again and I wish you the very best.

Cristea Andi  
Romania

*We sent Cristea a couple of issues of Handgunner since he couldn't get them in Romania and it seems he appreciated the gesture. Still, "Esteemed and Honorable" just might be a little strongly worded to describe us. Editor*

### SLS Holster a Detriment?

It was interesting to read the article on the Safariland 6004 holster (HandgunLeather Jan./Feb.). I have been using a Safariland holster with the same SLS as a duty holster for two months now. During weapon retention training we discovered a frontal grab of the weapon automatically released the hood and rolled it forward, freeing the weapon. The "clever button" is pretty much a redundancy since the strap can be depressed and rolled forward without it. In fact, I've found it is easier to depress the strap just to the belt side of the weapon's tang, as opposed to the slippery, harder-to-hit button. Fewer misdraws this way. Also, if the button is depressed with more than the end of the thumb, it's difficult to roll the strap far enough forward to free the weapon. This would seem to make the SLS a detriment to SWAT officers since they do a lot more crawling around and are far more



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likely to have something contact the strap, with the weapon on the thigh, and open the holster by accident. There is some security with the adjustable retention screw.

By having the button simply depress separately from the strap would probably eliminate most of the problem. A non-slip coating on the bottom would also help.

Classic still might be as good as cutting edge.

K. Coulon  
 Via E-mail

### Ban Gun Books, Eh?

I recently read an article illustrating another example of what anal-retentive, controlling people are doing to the law-abiding citizens in Canada who enjoy firearms — and reading about them. I say boycott stores who ban publications such as *American Handgunner* — which I have subscribed to for years 'cause it's the best! A lower rate for Canadian subscriptions may attract more readers, and I say screw these book stores. Keep up the professionalism of your magazine and its contents. It is superb.

Brian  
 Edmonton, AB Canada

### Fire and Brimstone

I couldn't agree more with Clint Smith's piece ("Technological Taffy") in the Jan./Feb. issue. I owned a 1911 Hybrid — looked cool, shot great, but there was no way I would have carried it for self defense as the blast from those ports would have been a real distraction — not to mention a safety concern.

At work I carry a Ruger GP100. It's a big, rugged, fixed sight revolver but it does the business. For anyone who is serious about improving the likelihood of their hitting the target, my advice is to spend the cash on ammo for practice instead of the latest gizmo.

Cleland Rogers  
 Northern Ireland

*And we'd have to hesitate a guess anyone carrying a revolver "at work" in Northern Ireland probably knows how to handle it. Editor*

### Colt Should Run Well

In reference to your "dig" at Colt in your recent "Insider" column, may I suggest the problem may lie in the fact many people think paying upwards of \$900 a handgun will make them better shooters. We know this is flawed thinking. As a handgun shooter for the last thirty years or so, and the owner of many Colt pistols, I can attest to their quality — and its recent (last three years) decline. I have several Govt. models, a

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Ed Van de Castle,  
Baltimore, Md.

*We've seen some Colts of late and frankly, were impressed. The new administration is trying hard and word has it they will be working their way back into the general consumer market in a bigger way in the future. We wish them all-success. Editor*

## Take That!

I'm writing about Kachenko's letter in the Jan/Feb issue of *Handgunner* wherein he states the Nov/Dec issue was the worse ever. I thought it was the best ever, and not only did I send my SIG 226 to Robar for customizing — I also sent in a subscription for your great magazine. So there.

Glenn VanTassel  
Guys Mills, PA

## Blade-Tech Tops

Thank you so much! As we all know, new guns hit the market, but holsters for them are sometimes not available. Such was the case with Kimber's new polymer-frame .45. I received my new Pro-Carry Ten II, but found I had nothing it would fit in. I have several 1911s, and many ways to carry them but still, the search was on for a holster. After hours on the phone I finally got my stuff together and called you *Handgunner*. You recommended Blade-Tech due to my needs, so I phoned. I talked to a gal named Carla, who really took the time to get the information down and even let me talk to the 'mold tech'. Three days later I received my new paddle from Blade-Tech — what a fit!

So lets get the word out — if you have a Kimber Ultra Carry Ten II or a Pro Carry Ten II, Blade-Tech has your holster!

Rick Barnes  
Lemoore, CA

## Pilot Speaks

I had to laugh when I read Ken Hackathorn's "Tactical Advantage" (March/April) on arming pilots. Ken must of been having an "Al Gore moment" with all that talk about a "lock

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box". As a Boeing 737 captain, I can tell Ken that just about everything he said was useless. First, what the hell good is a gun locked up in some box if I need it in a hurry? You call that practical? Second, Ken suggests the pilot could check the weapon in the cockpit? Would Ken have a cop do that with a service weapon in the squad car? Hey, why not have the cop keep his weapon locked up in the squad car like Ken suggests I do? Third, a .38 cal revolver? How about a Sig P229 .357 like the federal air marshalls carry? Issue it to each pilot who qualifies and have him or her responsible for it. Fourth, what hassle going through security? Does Ken think the armed LEOs who ride on my airplane are hassled going through security? Fifth, Ken thinks I'm going to be worried about the noise of a magnum or that I even care about being politically-correct when being attacked by some terrorist. Again, he's wrong.

Capt. Casey M. Burns  
 Alaska Airlines

## Jet-setting Handgunner

I have been traveling outside of the USA for a year now. To keep things simple I decided to substitute American gun magazines with the local offerings until I returned. By chance today I spotted your Nov/Dec issue on a Sydney newsstand. I couldn't resist the item on the cover, "My dog ate my gun." I must commend you on this pleasurable periodical. The layout, humor and content appeal to my tastes. For the first time in many years I am subscribing to a new gun magazine, which will have to follow my every move. Thank you for doing what you are doing!

Leo Hamel  
 San Diego, Sydney, Pretoria

## 50% Savings on Kimber

I know you're going to get more than one of these "blinding flashes of the obvious" but I wanted to be first. Here's my offer: For the paltry sum of half (yes half!) of what LA SWAT is spending to equip their elite, highly trained "operators" with a second Kimber, I will, in one five-minute session, teach every single officer how to mount a removable light on his gun. But wait! That's not all! In but a single follow-up session they will learn how to remove it! Astounding isn't it?

Come on, Dawson ("Light Speed Rail"), Springfield ("Operator"), and Caspian (Recon Rail) got it right. LA County (per-usual) got it pretty bass-ackwards. Another gun, just to have a light? Way to stay abreast of technology, guys. Instead, how about saving 90% vs. what buying these guys a second gun costs? Talk about decision by committee, jeez.

Figure, real money for a checkered, night-sighted, Kimber is a grand or so.



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Eric Stanley  
Via e-mail

*It's not quite that simple. The requirement for a particular duty holster kept the rail-equipped pistols off the list, in addition to LAPD's wish for the, shall we say "classically" styled SureFire model. Something else to think about is the fact each officer has a built-in back-up he is personally familiar with in case his primary gun needs servicing. Things are always more complicated than they may appear at first. Editor*

### 1911 Feud

You referenced the ongoing feud over the 1911. You do cover it a lot, but always present pertinent information. You helped influence my decision to buy a Springfield 1911 because of it. Thanks for publishing the best — and most informative — handgun magazine available, with knowledgeable contributing editors. You have my continued subscription.

Kevin McCall  
Via E-mail

*Forgive us if we allow ourselves a moment to bask in the face of all this praise. Editor*

## OOPS!

*In the Handgun Leather column, March/April, Ironoak Leather's phone number was mis-printed. The correct number is (215) 276-1615.*

*The cool photos shown in the STI/Handgunner match story, March/April, were taken by Handgunner's own Nyle Leatham. Sorry Nyle, for missing your photo credit!*

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PHOTO BY: ICHIRO NAGATA

## MASTER FORGER

*Continued from page 61*

Rexroat's designs are a reflection of his clean and unfettered lifestyle, and it's the creative part of knifemaking that he enjoys the most. According to Kirk, "One of the things I like about knife making is designing knives. With more designs than time to create them, you can be assured that something new is constantly on my drawing board and in the workshop. Hunting knives, folders, Bowies, self-defense knives, an occasional small sword and fancy knives all find their way into my imagination and on to my show tables. As varied as my knives are, there are two characteristics that I strive for — clean lines and excellent workmanship."

### Diversity Defined

Just about every knife Rexroat makes is a one-of-a-kind. Given that no two Damascus blades are exactly alike and natural handle materials vary, anyone who owns a Rexroat knife can take pride in owning a unique piece of edged art. Rexroat likes it that way. In his own words: "My folding knives come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes. I make gentleman, hunter, utility, and tactical-style folders. They range from "using" models to fully file-worked collector pieces. The handle and blade materials also vary widely. Liners are usually made from titanium and can be anodized if desired. Bolsters are 416 stainless steel, Damascus, or Mosaic Damascus. I prefer natural handle materials such as ivory, horn, and wood, but I can use almost anything."

"Most of my blades are forged 52100 steel, pattern-welded Damascus, or Mosaic Damascus. My folders are liner locks because I feel they have a stronger design. I like their all-screw construction and the fact they can be totally disassembled for maintenance. I believe a knife must feel good in your hand and hold an edge well. These two principles are paramount to any knife. I don't like to be confined to one style of knife, and so I have incorporated these two attributes into all the knives I make."

Prices on his folders range from \$500 to \$2,500, and since they are hand-made for each customer you can expect a wait of up to two years for delivery of an order. Kirk also attends several knife shows a year with a display of knives for sale. Those on a budget can delight in the fact that several of Kirk's designs are either already available or in production by Al Mar Knives. 

For more info contact, Rexroat Knives, (307) 464-0166, [www.rexroatknives.com](http://www.rexroatknives.com), e-mail: [rexknives@vcn.com](mailto:rexknives@vcn.com); Al Mar Knives, (503) 670-9080, [www.almarknives.com](http://www.almarknives.com)

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## WALTHER P-38

Continued from page 75

did shoot well. The best group of the day was posted by C&R Ammo's "First Shot" which put five rounds into a jaw-dropping 1.6" at 25 yards. However Aguila, Triton, and Winchester were all hot on its heels. Reliability was flawless with all loads except Aguila's mild IQ. This lightweight HP simply didn't have enough oomph to cycle with 100% reliability.

I shot the P1 extensively in drills from 2-100 yards. These went something like this: On the go, slap for leather and spend what seems like an eternity trying to dig the pistol out of the full flap military holster. When you finally clear leather the 27-ounce pistol proves quick in the hand. Index the prominent front sight onto an enemy of der Fatherland — undt squeeze. We're shooting a nine so you hammer another couple after the first and then switch targets. Holes appear wherever you put the front sight as brass pumps from the P1. Then all too soon the slide locks back. "Mein Gott!"

This is where the fun begins. First hit the release while manually digging the empty mag out and send it flying with your left hand. Then go for your spare mag. Jam the fresh mag in, hit the slide release, and back to work. When the last schwein hundt goes down, assess the situation, decock, and holster.

While it feels substantially different than an M1911 the P1 proved easy to shoot. Moving back, I noticed that from prone, it was a simple matter to put all nine rounds onto a silhouette 100 yards. Amused, I posted targets and fired some 5 shot groups at 50 yards using what I had left for ammunition. At this distance, Triton's Quik-Shok averaged an impressive 3.9".

### Zer Gut?

The only real drawback to the P1 is the smallish magazine capacity and its European magazine release. Due to its single stack design the grip is not so chunky, so people with smaller hands may find the old Walther more comfortable than some more modern pistols. As far as the magazine release goes all you can do is live with it.

I came away quite impressed by the P1. It's not like a Walther, or similar to a Walther, it is a Walther. While not perfect it's still a surprisingly capable pistol. It's also interesting to note our current service pistol, the Beretta M9, uses the same locking method. If you're in the market for an inexpensive 9mm that's dependable and has some historical flavor I suggest considering Century's P1.



For more information contact, Century Arms International, (800) 527-1252; [www.centuryarms.com](http://www.centuryarms.com)

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## OLD & NEW

Continued from page 69

non-existent. This is great, for the slide can move freely as soon as the barrel unlocks. Obviously there is no effect on accuracy since everything is locked up when the gun fires. What it does after the bullet is gone doesn't matter much.

Craig had installed a BarSto barrel. The heart and soul of any accuracy job is the fit of the bottom barrel lugs to the slide stop pin. To be right, contact must be even on both sides and along the full length of the lugs. This is a challenge that eludes more than a few custom smiths, but not Craig. The lugs were fitted perfectly. As good a job as I've seen in years. It's also a guarantee the gun is going to shoot well. The fit of the bushing to both barrel and slide was just right. You see a lot of them these days that are, in my opinion, way too tight where it serves no useful purpose. A wrench is needed to turn this one, but you don't have to bring a friend to help.

Study of the cosmetic aspects was just as satisfactory. The frame was pre-checked by Caspian, so after fitting all Craig had to do was finish it using his Dura Shield coated finish. The slide was grooved on top, also by Caspian, and Craig installed a set of Novak sights to top it all off.

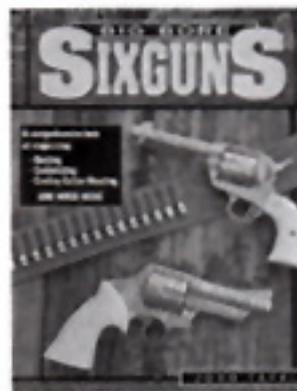
Testing continued with a longer function test that included the ammo going to be used in the accuracy test. Picking those loads is always difficult because it would be easy to create a false impression of a gun simply by choosing to show ammo it liked — or didn't. So I make the choice before any accuracy testing at all and try to have a mix of appropriate types that cover the range likely to be used in real world shooting. I included two of the most recent non-toxic loads from Federal and Remington: the Federal Ballisticlean (with a 165 gr. compressed copper bullet) and Remington's Disintegrator (with a 175 gr. sintered iron bullet). I also included the new Taurus solid copper 185 gr. Hex-bullet. (See chart)

### Just Say Wow

I also have to make a confession. This pistol appeals to me far more than I thought it would. To be sure the damascus is gorgeous, the titanium high-tech and Craig's work most excellent, but there is more. Here we have a great example of synergy where the whole is far more than the sum of the parts. And besides, the "wow-factor" is pretty much off the charts, and that's what this  kind of thing is all about.

For more information contact, Caspian Arms Ltd., (802) 472-6709; www.caspianarms.com; Craig Ltd., (620) 585-6385.

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# AL MAR LEGEND

Continued from page 61

Fortunately for Al Mar enthusiasts, the knife company did not go away. In 1981, a chance meeting between Al Mar and one Gary Fadden — a Heckler & Koch firearms company manager and knife enthusiast — proved to be more than a casual twist of fate. The two men formed a strong friendship that lasted until Al's death in 92.

It was Fadden who would buy the Al Mar knife company several years after his death, and who now carries on his mentor's name today. According to Gary, "Al was far ahead of his time in the cutlery business. Not only did he establish a whole new category of cutlery, he was also the first to create what is now called the "Tactical Folder" — this was the S.E.R.E./Attack. The S/A was first sold to the US Army and was the first knife of its kind ever to be purchased by a special unit within the armed services — the Army's S.E.R.E. school. Its officer in charge, Col. Nick Rowe, was the co designer of the knife along with Al Mar. Col. Rowe was also the longest held POW of the Vietnam war.

"The S.E.R.E./Attack was developed so that downed aircrew would have a very stout folding knife which could be

more easily carried in the very limited space available to them in their flight suits and aircraft," said Gary. "The purpose of this knife design is Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (S.E.R.E.) — hence the name."

**“ He works with us as our custom maker/designer/consultant, and all-around expert on darn near everything.”**

"Today the knife has evolved into the S.E.R.E. 2000," added Gary. "The "S2K" is now made stronger due to the heat treated stainless steel double liners vs. the brass liners of the older version, lighter at 6 oz. vs. 12 oz. and smaller with it's 3.6" blade vs. the older 4.25". The steel used today is VG-10, which is one of the finest steels for knives on the market."

## Affordable Rexroat

It was custom knifemaker Kirk Rexroat, the subject of our feature article,

who commanded the redesign of the rejuvenated S.E.R.E. 2000™. Fadden explains, "I met Rexroat about 10 years ago. A friend of mine gave me a knife — an outstanding knife — and it was made by this guy in Wyoming named Kirk Rexroat. From that first contact, Kirk and I kept in touch and our friendship grew from there."

"Today Kirk is an integral part of Al Mar Knives. He works with us as our custom maker/designer/consultant, and all-around expert on darn near everything. Most recently we've put his "Shrike™" design into production, next will be the Nomad™. Kirk also does design development/improvement which includes the Havana Clipper™, SERE 2000 and SERE Operator™."

"In addition to all of this, he also has quite a few new projects that he and AMK will do together in the future. You can order a custom made 'Al Mar' from Rexroat Knives. Kirk and I must approve each request before the knife can be made. We do this to maintain the integrity of the company, the designs and Kirk's good name."

With Fadden at the helm and Rexroat at the drawing board, fans of Al Mar Knives can rest assured that not only will the legend continue, but they can expect a steady stream of new offerings made in the tradition of the original.



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**P**eople who think the extractor is the most important part of a 1911 pistol are wrong. It's the magazine. Before the extractor can do its thing the magazine must serve up a cartridge at the right time and place. It's also true the majority of autopistol malfunctions can be traced to the magazine.

For that reason most of us have lots of magazines and we've all got a few that don't want to lock the slide back or do some other evil deed. Almost all of those can be traced to either the magazine follower — which must engage the slide stop pin to lock things back — or to the shape of the feed lips which can disrupt the timing of when a cartridge is released to be fed.

Gunsmith Wayne Novak is now offering some of the prettiest magazines I've ever seen. They are being made in Italy to his specifications and are polished and blued to such a finish you almost don't want to use them. Novak has designed the feed lips to have a very distinct release-point instead of a taper as is seen on some. But the biggest difference is the follower, which is notably thicker than most and made of nickel-plated steel.

For the 1911 there are seven round magazines, with or without base pads; eight round types that have a removable



plastic base and six rounders for Officers-size pistols, again with or without pads. All can be had in either blue or nickel finish.

Of course time is the only true proof of a magazine's function, but I have used them now for several extensive tests in a couple of different pistols. They have functioned perfectly with all types of ammunition, including target wadcutter loads which are the most challenging of all. And they've earned a place with my carry gun.



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## KART EZ-FIT BARREL

**K**art's EZ-fit barrel makes it possible to get a real match barrel fit with considerably less work. The secret to accuracy in a government model-type pistol is the fit of the bottom barrel lugs to the slide stop pin. Unless the pin fits properly and locks the barrel up completely, accuracy won't reach full potential. Kart's barrel eliminates that in favor of two humps, evenly spaced in the top locking lug. It's much easier to work on those surfaces, although the job demands just as much patience. Kart has a small file ground to fit the space that is just about mandatory. The instructions are good too.

Initial work is done using a loose bushing and you begin by fitting the headspace extension so the barrel can go up into the slide lugs and then gently begin to work on the humps on the top of the barrel. I use a Sharpie to blacken them and try it on the frame. You won't be able to get the slide to close all the way but the blackening will rub off and show you where to remove metal. This is one of those things where you must take a stroke or two with the file and try it on the frame. This may have to be repeated dozens of times.

The next step is to fit the new bushing. It

will require some polishing to go into the slide and you definitely want it to be snug enough to require a bushing wrench, but not overly-tight. Cycle the slide manually and the gun will show you where to cut if more is needed. When you're done you'll have a true match-grade barrel that locks up just as well as a custom job. Just be sure to make haste slowly.



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## SHOOTING SPECS

**A**s we grow older we lose some ability to accommodate between objects that are close or far away. Shooters have it even worse because the front sight at first appears fuzzy and later on there will be a bunch of them. Sooner or later we're going to need help. The condition is called Presbyopia and is a perfectly normal accompaniment to the aging process.

Wizard Industries now offers "Shooting Specs" which are made of optically clear polycarbonate. This is the stuff of which good safety glasses are made and these have side protection and adjustable temples. But they also have a bifocal segment in the lower quadrant of the lens that lets us find the correction needed to bring the front sight into focus. The remainder of the lens has no corrective power.

By the time this becomes a problem for a shooter it probably also interferes with reading or other close-up work so we will likely know how much correction we need. Shooting Specs are available from +1.0 to +3.0 in 0.5 diopter increments but if you don't know a quick trip to a drugstore that sells reading glasses will help you find out. The drawback of those glasses is that they probably are not safety glasses and the whole lens

will have the correction which may prove disturbing.

I've long had a pair of special shooting glasses made with the proper correction for me to see the front sight. The Shooting Specs provided identical results. 

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Of course you don’t see any of this because it’s inside the waterproof case. But, when you press the button to activate the stabilizing gear, you’ll hear the motors whir and see the image jump a bit and then become steady. It’s one of those gee-whiz neat sorts of things.

There are two modes of operation: “Land” and “On Board.” As you would expect, the land mode is for normal hand-held use, but the on-board mode facilitates use from cars, boats or aircraft. It’s really quite remarkable to ride down the road watching cars both coming and going and be able to read distant license plates. Don’t try this while you’re the one driving



though! At a more practical shooter level, it was also easy to see .22 caliber bullet holes at 100 yards. The StabilEyes have a broad range of usefulness and should be especially interesting to law enforcement and boaters.



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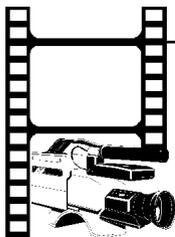
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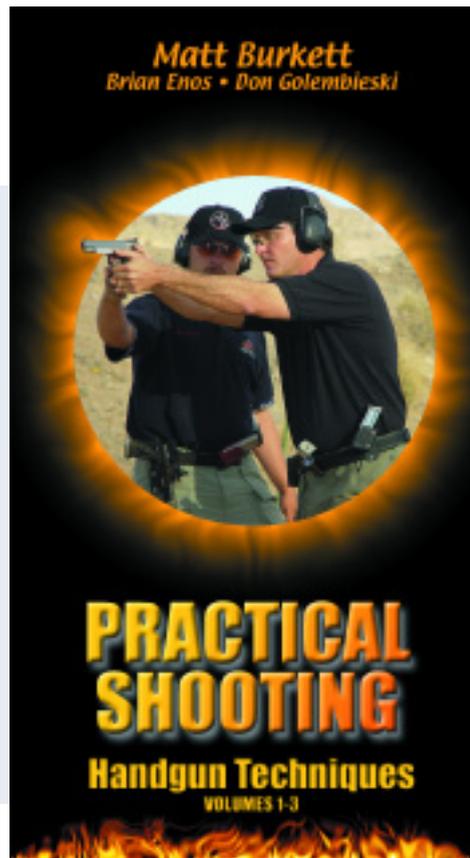
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**Matt Burkett's**

## PRACTICAL SHOOTING HANDGUN TECHNIQUES, Vol. 1-3

**Larry Pomykalski**



If you recognize Matt Burkett's name, it's probably because he's been busy winning some important matches over the last few years. What's less well known is Matt has been offering some private, high-dollar training in his corner of the Arizona desert. And now he's distilled much of that training into a new training DVD set called "Practical Shooting Handgun Techniques."

Burkett's new DVDs neatly side-step some of the problems evident in previous shooting videos. Professional camera and sound work allow the viewer to concentrate on the material, instead of trying to decipher sketchy sound and out-of-focus images. The DVD format — a first for the industry — lets the viewer re-watch important sections easily and conveniently. You can practice with your auto in one hand and your remote control in the other. Just make sure you're unloaded, eh?

Burkett's instruction matches the quality of the production, with a series of competition-proven techniques that are presented with humor and clarity. His on-screen presence is comfortable and authoritative and there's no question the man knows what he's talking about since he demonstrates every technique discussed.

"Practical Shooting Handgun Techniques" gives viewers some world-class instruction in the techniques currently winning matches. Since viewing I've seen improvements in my own shooting, and after twenty five years of shooting and continuing formal instruction, I think that's remarkable. I guess you can teach old dogs something. 

For more information contact, Matt Burkett  
Hot Shots, 7040 Wilshire Dr., Scottsdale, AZ  
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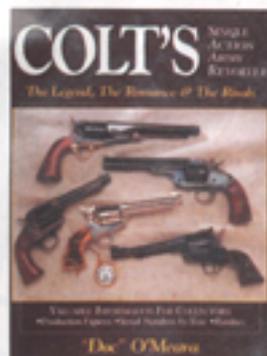
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Alumagrips

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## INNER PIECE THUMB BREAK HOLSTER

Desantis Holster and Leather

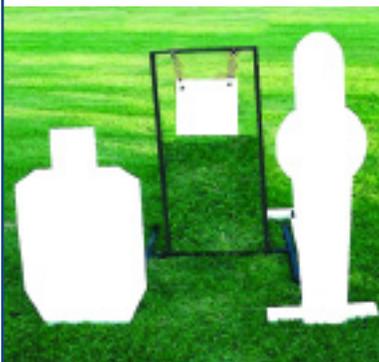
The Desantis Gunhide Model #098 "Inner Piece Thumb Break" Holster will comfortably conceal the full sized .45 Government Model in the waistband. Originally designed for the FBI's elite HRT unit, the #098 is now available to the general public. The holster features a reinforced top, a polymer sight track, and a rear trailing stabilizer wing. The thumb break is designed to engage only in the cocked and locked position (condition one) and Desantis strongly recommends that only well-trained personnel use this type of holster. Available for the Government model and clones. For more information call 800-GUNHIDE or see the web site at [www.desantisholster.com](http://www.desantisholster.com)



## EZ SET TARGET AND STAND

Evans Targets

Evans Targets, a family owned and operated company, is now manufacturing, in addition to its reactive steel, rifle and pistol targets, it's own Ez Set Target and Stand. The Stand's unique design allows the shooters to easily move the unit and replace the targets with other EZ Set Targets. These are especially popular with cowboy action shooters. All targets are plasma cut from 500 Brinnell steel, in either 3/8" or 1/2", and built for a lifetime of hard shooting. The company offers a variety of standard targets as well as custom design work. For more information contact, Evans Targets at Rt. 1, Box 6C, Drummond, Oklahoma, 73735, or call (580) 493-2738 or visit them on the web at [www.evanstarget.com](http://www.evanstarget.com)



## ROUGH RIDER S/A REVOLVER — BLACK STAIN

Heritage Manufacturing, Inc.

Heritage Manufacturing located in Opa Locka, Fl., announces the availability of the popular Rough Rider Single Action Revolver in a new BLACK SATIN FINISH. With last year's intro of the Silver Satin Finish quickly becoming a best seller, they've now added 4 models to the popular line in this new, great looking, low gloss black satin finish. The grips are a wooden green camo laminate which make this the perfect side arm for bow hunters and other situations where a non-glare side arm is necessary. The Millet Rear Adjustable Sight and Williams Fire Red Ramp Front system comes standard with all of the Adjustable Sighted Rough Riders. MSRP is only \$184.95. For more information call (305) 685-5966 or visit the web at [www.heritagemfg.com](http://www.heritagemfg.com)



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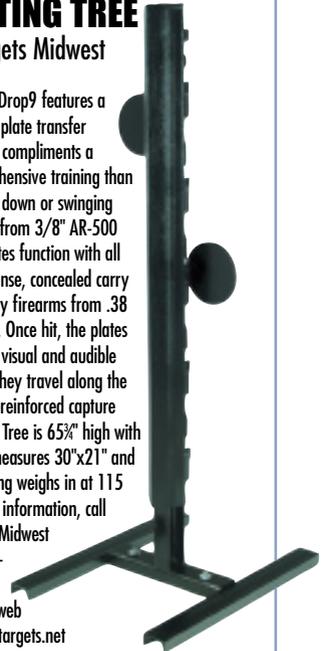
Heinie Specialty Products

Heinie Specialty Products announces the availability of fixed combat style sights for the NEW Springfield XD Sub-Compact Pistol. These are designed to create a faster, more precise sight picture. The sights are CNC machined from bar-stock and feature an angled, serrated, rear sighting surface. Available in plain black for \$50.35 or with Heinie's exclusive "Straight Eight" 2-dot night sight system for \$104.95. Heinie can install the sights with a 1-2 day turn around time, or installation can easily be done with a Sig factory sight installation tool. For more information, contact Heinie Specialty at 1-877-SIGHTS1, or visit them on the web at [www.heinie.com](http://www.heinie.com)

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## 3C LED FLASHLIGHT Streamlight Inc.

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## ADD IT UP

750

Number of guns missing from the FBI's inventory, according to an audit by the Justice Department. Oops ...

169

Number of arrests related to Super Bowl in San Diego.

2

Number of riot/looting sprees in Oakland. One for a Raider win at the AFC Championships and one for a Raider loss at the Super Bowl. What do they want?

20,000,000

Number of plastic mail-storage tubs declared missing by the Postal Service at \$3.25 each.

14,000

Number of crows on the University of Michigan's Ann Arbor campus.

2,800

Cost in dollars for 14,000 .410 shotgun shells to solve the crow problem.

932

Cost in dollars of S&W's new 1911 pistol.

7

Number of heroes who gave their lives in our quest to expand human knowledge in space. *Handgunner* honors that "Magnificent Seven."

Continued from page 130

and energy to learn things that others say are true.

In my humble opinion, that recruit — or anyone who is "book-learned" — has no right to tout their teacher's opinions as anything other than "information I have learned from someone else." To imply, or to even let it remain unsaid — thereby assumed — the information they spout comes from personal experience, is tantamount to a lie. In my opinion it also destroys any credibility they have, or may ever strive to hold.

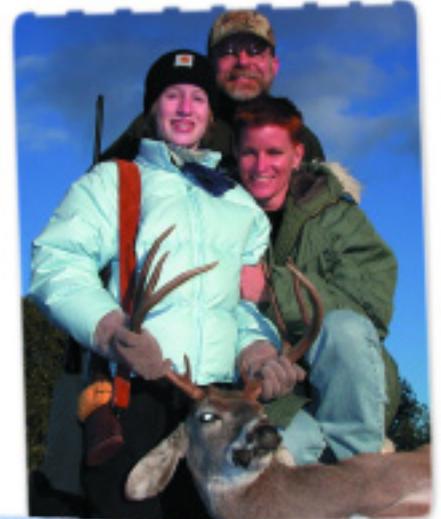
When you read an article, balance what you read by the qualifications of the author. Be it reloading, hunting advice or pistolsmithing, if the writer implies they have the "experience" perhaps it's best to be sure, before you treat it as anything other than "entertainment."

But that's just how I think, and who knows, I might be wrong.

## HUNTING WORKS

**U**nder the "family that hunts together stays together" department, I offer my own. In a shameless case of simply wanting to see my family in the pages of *Handgunner*, take note of the smiling faces herein. The deer Ms. Suzi has was taken with one shot last year. The nice 9-point Texas whitetail we are all posed around was taken by daughter Madison on Christmas Eve and the other is dear-old-Dad with an antelope in Wyoming, taken with a Thompson Center in 7x30 Waters.

I'm here to tell you, I speak from personal experience when I say if you take your family hunting, it promotes a kind of comradarie and plain-old-togetherness that not many other things can manage. If you don't have the time or inclination to go hunting, at least take them shooting. So just do it, will you?



Family outings ... sure beats Disneyland!



## Homeland Security To Allow Pilots With Guns

**I**f they can ever get it sorted out, any pilot of any commercial passenger airline will be authorized to carry a handgun in the cockpit in accordance with Transportation Security Admin. guidelines. There are things to be resolved yet, like specifics as methods of carry, how to store them and other points. The pilots will be deputized as federal security agents in a class with air marshalls. It's about time.



# “Unarmed Civilians” Duuuh ...



This, from former President Jimmy Carter’s Nobel Peace prize acceptance speech, Oslo, Norway, December 12, 2002:

“There is a plethora of civil wars, unrestrained by rules of the Geneva Convention, within which an overwhelming portion of the casualties are unarmed civilians who have no ability to defend themselves. And recent appalling acts of terrorism have reminded us that no nations, even superpowers, are invulnerable.” Thank you Mr. Carter for putting into words what we’ve been trying to explain to you and your ilk all these many years. Gads ... will they ever learn?



## Chainguns and Real Leather Holsters

Proof that no matter how high-tech we get, an old fashioned piece of leather with a Browning Hi-Power nestled inside can still be comforting. Here, Russ Rybka (son of leathermaker Thad Rybka) and helicopter pilot for the good guys, proves it. We’re inclined to believe when Thad made that shoulder rig he put some extra care and attention into it. Wouldn’t you? Go get ‘em Russ.

INSIDER

## S&W Goodies

A recent factory tour and visit with S&W historian Roy Jinks revealed some interesting things. Most importantly, I got to handle a genuine S&W flush valve . After handling it I could see how Smith got the idea for their first big-bore handgun. It pointed very naturally ...

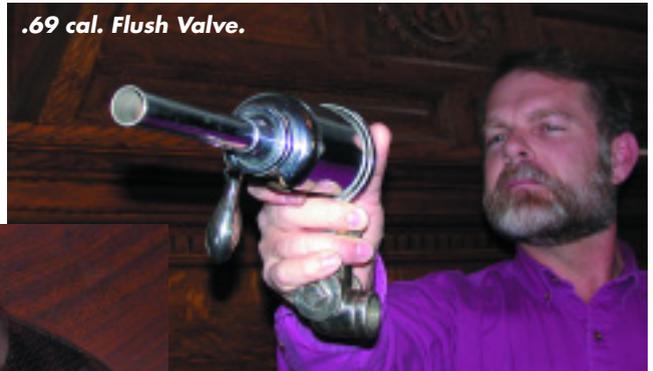
The big news is S&W has indeed introduced a really big bore boomer. Called the Model 500 .500 S&W Magnum, the new five-shooter is built on a new “X” frame and is a giant among handguns. Smith built the cartridge first (working with Cor-Bon) and came up with a .50 caliber case that looks like you could have your morning coffee in it. Throwing a 275 gr. Barnes X at 1,665 fps, a 400 Gr. Hawk SP at 1,675 and a 440 Hard Cast bullet at 1,625 fps, you can see this .50 is big medicine.

After they built the cartridge, Smith used a fancy machine to design a revolver cylinder around the cartridge and then a big, hunking revolver around the cylinder.

It’s got a K-frame grip, ball-detent front lock-up, interchangeable front sights, four-screw sideplate and is drilled and tapped for a scope. With the compensator and 8 3/4” barrel, it weighs in at a hefty 72.5 ounces. It’s handsome and, especially with the “light” load, a real pleasure to shoot. Being a semi-wimp when it comes to the big bruisers, I touched-off the 440 cast load with both eyes shut and my teeth gritted. Other than a really big boom and a sharp but controllable roll-back, nothing was amiss.

The S&W 1911 is for

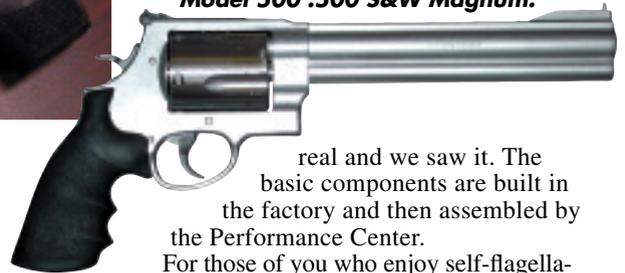
.69 cal. Flush Valve.



625 Ultra Carry, .45 ACP.



Model 500 .500 S&W Magnum.



real and we saw it. The basic components are built in the factory and then assembled by the Performance Center.

For those of you who enjoy self-flagellation, the “under 27 ounces” of the new scandium-framed Model 329 should cause you no-end of pleasure. It’s basically a Model 29 .44 Magnum in “space gun” guise. With titanium cylinder, this puppy almost floats out of your hand. When you touch it off though, it gets your attention. I have to admit, it’s the first time firing a handgun actually hurt so much I didn’t want to do it again. It’s awfully good looking and with the right loads and grip it will be dandy.

They’ve also got a nifty single stack auto in .40 called the Model 4040 PD and, you big bore pocket-gun types, will love the 625 Ultra Carry (a six-shot, .45 ACP L-frame) with fixed sights. Look for detailed reviews on all of these in up-coming issues. There’s all this and more great fun ahead.

Also, all success to new President of Smith & Wesson Corp., Roy Cuny. He seems like a regular guy and will continue to push S&W forward. Bob Scott, who basically single-handedly turned the ship at Smith before it crashed onto the rocks, assumes Charimanship of Smith & Wesson Corporation.





# THE INSIDER

Roy Huntington

## On Credibility

**T**ake a moment and walk the conceptual dog with me here. We often get readers who write or phone and tell us — often with great vigor — how they rely on *Handgunner* for real-world information, training, news and, as one reader told me: “For the kinds of things that may save my life someday.” That was a sobering call and when I hung up, I had a good, hard think.

Throughout my life, I’ve usually looked at consumer gun magazines as entertainment. A way to spend a relaxing hour or two enjoying one of many interests I have. I’ve learned about history, engineering, reloading, carry methods, hunting, target shooting, competition and more. I’ve enjoyed good fiction by Skeeter Skelton, marveled at Elmer’s exploits and confess I’ve learned more than I can recall about our avocation. Yet, I’ve always taken what I’ve read with a grain of salt. For a reason.

During my 20-odd years as a cop, I was subjected to a wide-regimen of training about how to survive in the real world. Most of that training was conducted by people who lived it, who actually “walked the walk” as it were. These were — on the whole — not arm-chair warriors, but people who had stared down a gun barrel in a dark alley or had fought for their lives in a gutter. Which may have made me a doubting-Thomas when it came to the popular press. After all, who were these people who touted their expertise on those glossy pages? Let’s just say it: Many were — and are — merely self-proclaimed experts with little or no real-world experience in the field they often write about. Hard words? You bet. But the truth nevertheless — and you, and I, know it to be the case.

All of which made me sit and re-evaluate our role here at *Handgunner*. When I took over as editor one of the first things I did was make a commit-

ment to put out the finest magazine of its type. Period. While the Ichiro Nagata photos are an integral part of the package, the meat of the matter are the thoughts and opinions of our writers. As such, I constantly evaluate what comes over my desk for relevance, intent, applicability in the real world and, above all, honesty.

Part of that equation is credibility. In light of the fact many (most?) of our readers rely upon *Handgunner* for information they apply in the real-world — often in potentially serious situations — it seems we are more than a simple, but enjoyable, way to pass the time while looking at pretty pictures. Many people look to *Handgunner* for the kind of experienced writing they can trust. Often, that trust goes much farther than simply whether or not they should buy a certain new accessory. It extends to tips and training ideas that just really might save their lives one day.

And that is, indeed, a sobering thought. And a serious responsibility to carry on our shoulders.

As such, aside from the fact *Handgunner* will always be a “fun” read, with the humor and irreverence we’re known for, when the cards turn serious, you will be able to rely on us for the facts, as well as we can ferret them out. And in that spirit, our list of contributing writers will continue to change and adapt to meet the demands. Times change, and to fail to adapt is tantamount to a crime — and assurance of a slow, stagnant death.

In today’s world, Charles Askins would probably have been arrested and tried for many of his exploits, and while his stories may be cause for wonderment at times, they simply aren’t relevant today. Police work is done differently. Much differently. We can learn from many of the old timers but have to keep our collective feet firmly planted in



today’s world. The “Old Backshooter,” Askins, is probably turning over in his grave at the thought of “girls” as cops, and would marvel at the fact we don’t simply “shoot the jazbo’s” as he used to say (although I agree it seems at times his ideas may have merit). But that’s precisely why we can enjoy the old school — but not unfailingly adhere to it. Yet, much of what we read today simply is not true in the real world ... of today.

*Handgunner* will continue to evaluate trends, training and equipment and make our “best-guess” as to what works and what doesn’t. We’ll rely on a staff of writers who we will insist have real-world credibility. There is already a rule in effect at *Handgunner*: “If you don’t really know about it, don’t write about it.” And I’m downright nasty about it. We’ll continue to hone, polish and improve in this department constantly.

Perhaps the most important point here is the fact training doesn’t imply competence. A police recruit who successfully completes a 600 hour academy is not a competent police officer. He’s merely someone who has been subjected to 600 hours of training without shooting himself in the foot. His competency will be determined when he puts his training to work on the mean streets. If he succeeds, after time, he earns the right to teach others as to what works — and what doesn’t — in that unforgiving real world. Until then, he is simply someone who has spent the time

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