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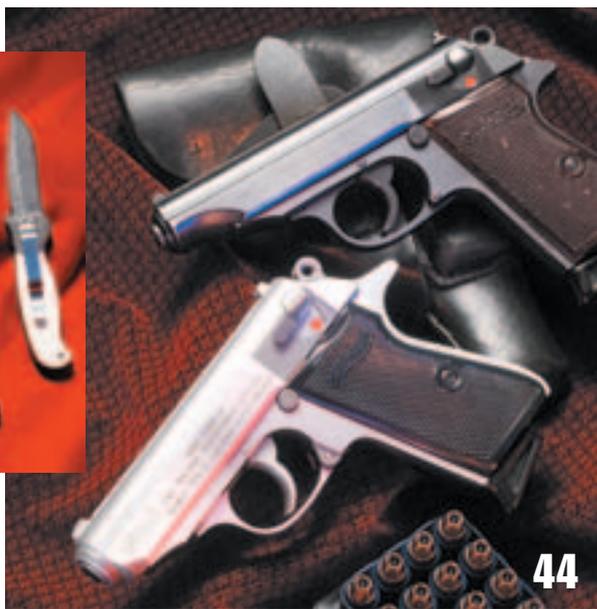
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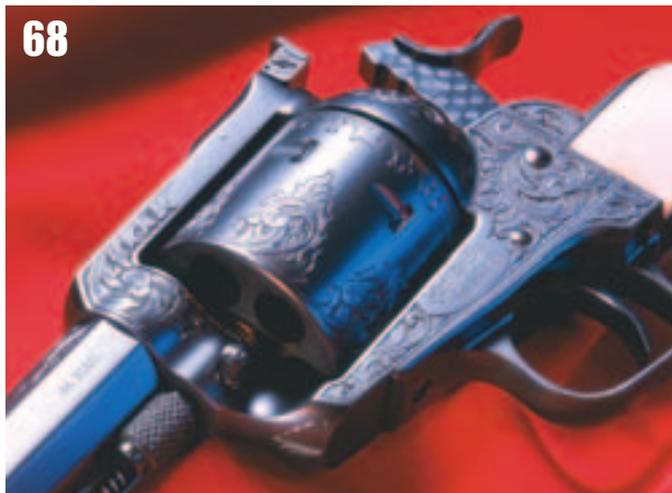
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# SPEAKOUT

**YOUR FORUM  
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## JULY/AUGUST

Yer'all's feature on the S&W .45 ACP 1911 was well done — 'cept for one minor bit of trivia I feel y'all ought to know about: "Hell Freezes Over?!" (July/August 2003).

Well, just so you know, in Norway, just south of the town of St. Jodalshalsen is another town, and that town is "Hell." No kidding, get your atlas out. Now as

Hell's latitude is about the same as Fairbanks, Alaska, you can bet your booty Hell freezes over, every winter.

Matthew Huggler  
Seattle, WA

### Personal Responsibility

Might I suggest a topic for "The Insider" column? It would fit neatly with the recent issue's column "On Credibility" (May/June 2003). I suggest you write a column entitled "On Responsibility," making it clear that each of us must accept personal responsibility for learning and practicing "For the kinds of things that may save my life someday." I found this statement a little disturbing

only because, if taken literally, it implies personal protection can be wholly learned from reading. I don't for a minute think you meant that, but I know there are readers who do. I know some of them. Techniques and trends need to be reported and evaluated, and *American Handgunner* does the best job I am aware of, thanks to the quality of your contributors.

Which brings me to my next point — and I don't mean this as a criticism — just an observation. I've been a journalist practically all my life and have worked in both daily reporting and for special interest magazines involving hunting, fishing and agriculture. Some of the best articles ever written, that actually taught the reader something, were not written by an "expert," but by someone who had the



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talent to communicate the lessons of experts to others.

Finally, I agree it's great to learn from the most experienced people possible and I try to take classes from the "Big Name" instructors whenever possible. Money constraints limit my ability to do this and therefore I am more often limited to local instructors who do not have the experience of an Ayoob or Clint Smith. It's my responsibility to learn as much as I can from every possible resource available and then process it to the best of my ability.

Your columns are always thought provoking and I wish you lived in this part of Red America so we could get together sometimes and discuss some of these topics.

Jack Carson  
Noble, OK

*Jack, you inspired me to take on "responsibility." Check out The Insider in this issue. Editor*

**#\*&\$^@!**

In your May/June issue a reader wrote in about vulgar language in your magazine. Well, my reply to him (if I was a magazine editor) is that gun enthusiasts enjoy their hobby or business because of our nation's Second Constitutional Amendment giving us "the right to bear arms." But there is another amendment a magazine has to fight for just as hard — the First Amendment, giving the right of free speech and freedom of the press. You can't pick and choose which amendment you think is right. You can't say "Today, I will defend the Second Amendment and not the First." If you can teach your children the proper way to handle guns, you can teach them the proper way to use their speech.

Richard Calarino  
West Palm Beach, FL

*Rich, you took the words right out of my free-speech-type mouth. Thanks for the vote of understanding. One thing you could never call us here at Handgunner is a bunch of stuffed-shirts. Neither are our readers. Let's concentrate on content and enjoy the infrequent use of colorful language for what it is — colorful language. Editor*

**Use Personal Protection**

I like S&W revolvers, I have six of them. I won't be adding a S&W 1911 to my unnecessarily-large collection, though. Seeing the warning "CAUTION — CAPABLE OF FIRING WITH THE MAGAZINE REMOVED" etched on the frame, removed it from consideration. Duh, I want it to be capable of firing any



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time there is one in the chamber. Why ruin the classic lines of a 1911 with needless warnings? Could it be one of those Lawyer ideas (Is that an oxymoron)?

I also won't go out with a woman who has "CAUTION — USE PERSONAL PROTECTION" tattooed on her forehead. I guess I'm just a superficial guy.

Joseph Schiros  
Via e-mail

**Shoot Until It's Over**

In reference to "Foolish Fusillades?" (May/June 2003), I believe Dave Anderson should have explained, to his friends, just how little time it can take three officers to fire 20 shots. I doubt it was more than two to three seconds. Was it McGivern or Topperwain who could put five shots from a revolver into a half dollar size group in 45/100 of a second?

I do not know about today, however in some years past, law enforcement officers were prudently trained to keep firing until the threat ended. Mr. Anderson should have explained to his friends this was not the movies! This was a real life situation. Mr. Anderson missed a real opportunity to properly inform the uninformed. The tragedy was only one shot hit its mark instead of all twenty.

Carl J. Hand  
Martinsville, IN

*Carl, knowing Dave Anderson, I'm sure he "fought the good fight" with those people. Indeed, in my experience in the field as a cop in San Diego, I was astounded on several occasions at how quickly officers could empty their handguns when the chips were down. My own agency was in public-relations hot water time and time again due to some "Over 25 Shots Fired" hysteria-inducing headline — until it was explained the shootings involved multiple officers, who all fired at the same threat at the same moment. As you say, the "shoot until the threat has ended" rule may entail more than one or two shots. Editor*

**Macarena Revisited**

While I have no doubt you are an experienced trainer, I have to wonder why anyone would want to come to Thunder Ranch the way you talk about them. Having pet names for groups of people — "gun camp junkies" — (Reality Check, March/April) and then putting it in print would discourage anyone with any previous experience from coming to your class. The muzzle tucked into the groin technique that you did not want to give a name to, is obviously "SUL" as L.A. SWAT refers to it, or the "safety circle" as the N.R.A. refers

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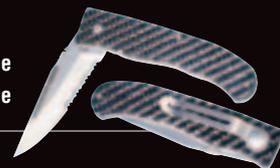
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to it. You really should learn more about a technique before you put it down. If the students were pointing the gun at their groin or their feet, then they were not doing the technique properly. Law enforcement instructors do a lot of things differently than civilian instructors, but our main goal is safety, for police and the public. Done properly, the "safety circle" is one of the safest ways to handle a firearm in a crowd. I would like to be there if you ever care to show L.A. SWAT (the inventor of the technique) its shortcomings.

Jim Bledsoe  
Southern Calif

Clint Responds:

Dear Mr. Bledsoe,  
"Gun Camp Junkies" is a term of endearment. It is not demeaning. Many of my students attend many schools and this is a name they have given themselves in good humor. As far as position "SUL" goes, Max Joseph created it, not LAPD SWAT.

I disagree with any technique advocating I remove my visual contact with a known — or perceived — threat (i.e. safety circle). And, you are correct about there being a difference between LEO firearms instructors and civilian instructors. A big difference is if a civilian student gets killed in civilian training, civilian instructors get indicted. Speaking as a civilian instructor, of course.

As far as teaching L.A. SWAT anything, I wouldn't be so bold. But part of that stems from the fact their representatives and I — who I have trained with in rifle and other matters — seem to get along just fine. As a side note, I phoned Scott Reitz, who is the Primary Firearms Instructor for the LAPD Metropolitan Division, and he said:

1. LAPD did not invent the SUL.
2. LAPD looked at the SUL technique and disregards the technique and concept.
3. LAPD does not teach the SUL.

On May 20, 2003 I talked to Mr. Max Joseph in regards to the position SUL. Mr. Joseph outlined several points of interest:

1. He and Alan Brosnan of "TEES" developed the concept of SUL in 1997.
2. SUL is Portuguese for "South" or, in this application, "down" or "muzzle down."
3. Many of their clients speak Spanish or Portuguese.
4. It is a simple command to stage, set or reset the muzzle direction.
5. It was developed for personnel armed mostly with handguns. It's a handgun position primarily — minor modifications are necessary with long guns — but they still use the term SUL.
6. It is designed for transient movement

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of personal in, and around, each other, in team concepts.

7. It is applicable in close confines to keep muzzles off of themselves and other team members.

8. It is also used to maintain domination of unfriendly, but not necessarily violent, groups of people. As an example: if shooter ONE was holding an area of responsibility and shooter TWO needed to pass in front of shooter ONE, shooter ONE could lower or tuck the muzzle into a position where, during this action, shooter TWO was not covered by shooter ONE's muzzle.

9. It could — and should be practiced — but is not intended, needed or required for regular static range work.

10. SUL applied properly, is not intended to, or does it cover, the person holding the gun or those around them. And, to clarify things, SUL, as used by my "gun camp junkies" that day in class, was done incorrectly. They were indeed pointing the muzzles of their respective handguns at their feet, legs and groin area.

Respectfully,  
Clint Smith

*Editor's Note: Clint also received the following from Mr. Alan Brosnan, an associate of Max Joseph's:*

Greetings from Brazil,

Position SUL, is not a classic "gun ready" position, but rather a "gun safety" position. It was primarily designed for the Brazilian officers as they poured out of their SUVs on missions in the slums. Their muzzle control was atrocious, and since Max and I were in the SUVs, it did not take much brain power for us to create a solution to this evident problem — be it right or wrong for many of the US instructors and critics. I think most of them thought it was a substitute for a classic "gun-ready" (position 3) position and that is where the confusion came in.

The position has taken off very big among the law enforcement and military we teach in the US. After they understand the concept, it's hard for them to disagree with it, especially since it affects safety — predominately their own!

Stay safe,  
Alan Brosnan

For more information, contact, Tactical Firearms Training Team, Max Joseph, 16835 Algonquin St. Suite 120, Huntington Beach, CA. 92649; (714) 846-8065; www.TFTT.com; Alan Brosnan, P.O. Box 1345, Southaven, MS 38671; (800) 950-8337; www.TEES-Training.com

## Rumor Mill Musings

Last year I made the trip to Thunder Ranch and had one of the greatest times in recent memory at a training program. What made it that way was the TR hospi-

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## SPEAKOUT

tality. On first contact with the lovely Diane in the office, you feel as if you were talking to an old friend. On the range, the first-rate staff of instructors continued this experience with just the right edge to push the shooters to their next best personal level of shooting. The obvious guiding force here is, of course, Clint and Heidi Smith.

Not much can set me in a bad way, but one definite means of doing so, is to speak poorly about good people or their operation. I'm referring to Mr. Huntington's "The Insider" column (July/Aug 2003) on the "rumor mill" reference to Mr. Smith and TR. Mr. Huntington showed more class than perhaps these eggheads did by not identifying the source of the rumors, by just explaining the evolution currently taking place. Personally I'm proud to have an editor such as Mr. Huntington at the helm of the only off-the-rack publication I have in my office.

As far as those responsible for the rumor statement, here is some advice my Daddy gave to me a long time ago: "Never miss a good opportunity to shut up."

Timothy O'Rourke  
Clearwater, Florida

### "Point Of Impact" Rocks

I was not surprised by the volume of letters praising Mr. Stephen Hunter's works (March/April 2003). I was surprised by the lack of mention of the book "Point Of Impact." As an avid reader, I can't name one book I have enjoyed more. By the way, Mr. Hunter, "Point of Impact" reads like a screenplay written expressly for Sam Elliot. Where's the movie?

Dick Myers  
St. Augustine, FL

### Gunfighters? Us?

You have a pretty good magazine. Most of the articles are interesting and all are well written. You don't seem to feature a bunch of guys who have been to a few tactics schools and now consider themselves gunfighters. I get really tired of these guys (I will not disclose MY list of offenders, out of respect for your mag). Anyway, thanks for a pretty good read.

Scott Hyatt  
Via e-mail

### Grip Safety Anachronism

Well, some you win and some you lose. As a serious 1911 shooter/fan, "gun snob," and S&W collector, I read "Hell Freezes Over?!" (July/August 2003) by Charles Petty, with great interest. I also already own and shoot two SW 1911s,

Continued on page 105



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## Fiber Optic Fun

**F**ocus on the front sight. How many times have you heard that one? Some front sights, though, are easier to see than others. Under the right conditions it's hard to beat a plain, black, vertical post for precise sight alignment. The right conditions are: a white or light-colored target, good light and eyesight capable of bringing the sight into sharp focus.

Such conditions are not always available. Over the years many alternatives have been developed to better handle low-light situations. Hunters have fitted their rifles with gold, silver and ivory front sight inserts. Handgun sights have been fitted with dot inserts of various bright colors, even with tiny mirrors to reflect light onto the sight.

White paint isn't very bright, gold and silver are expensive, and ivory will get you picketed unless you can prove the elephant died peacefully of old age. Fortunately modern technology has brought another solution: front sights equipped with fiber-optic inserts. Fiber optics don't glow in the dark the way tritium night sights do, but they do pick up and intensify any available light.

## Fuddy Sights

**O**n the matter of sights, I'm a hopeless old fud. I got used to a vertical, black front sight back when I was shooting bullseye (and that, my friend, was not yesterday). Those sights weren't just black, but dead-flat black, using the old carbide lamp to smoke the sights before every match or practice session. A couple of years ago I bought an STI Executive, which came fitted with a fiber optic front sight. Always ready to try something new (not), I promptly sprayed the front sight with sight black. For accuracy testing on a nice bright range the old familiar black sights were satisfactory.

Oddly enough it has become harder to focus on the sights in recent years. Why manufacturers insist on attaching whiskers to their sights is beyond me. I've talked to them about it and none can give a satisfactory explanation. A couple even made the preposterous suggestion my aging eyes might be the cause. Yeah, right.



*STI Executive.*

*Dawson Precision fiber optic sight has a bright red dot in a steel sight blade. The square steel blade provides the tradition Patridge-type sight picture if maximum precision in aiming is required.*



## Presidential Choice

**M**ichael Voigt is the current USPSA president and an IPSC Standard class world champion. From my perspective, Mike is a youngster in his early 40s. Like me, he's become aware of the fuzzy sight conspiracy, but unlike me he decided to do something about it. He went to a fiber optic front sight from Dawson Precision on his STI match pistol.

According to Voigt, the advantage of the fiber optic sight is most apparent during the draw and when transitioning

from target to target. He says, "The bright front sight is easier to keep track of when the gun is moving. While swinging from one target to another, I'm watching the target, but the sight is easy to follow with my peripheral vision." For a relatively easy shot at a close target, a glimpse of the bright dot above or through the rear sight may be adequate. What about a tougher shot?

Voigt explains, "Dawson fits the fiber optic dot in a black steel blade with nice square edges. If I need a really precise sight picture, say for a fifty-yard shot, I just focus sharply on the sight blade. It takes a bit longer but I'm not giving up anything in terms of accuracy."

With a new optic tube fitted on my Executive (the old one was gummed-up with sight black) I found Voigt was right. It's amazing the difference it makes to actually see the front sight. Imagine that.

Dawson Precision offers the front sight in either .90" or .125" widths and with either red or green optic tubes. It's available to fit STI/SV, Kimber, Springfield, Beretta and Glock pistols. Suggested retail prices start at \$38.99. The tube is well protected by the steel sight against most knocks and dings. If it does get damaged, or you just want to change colors, additional fiber optic tubes will cost you the princely sum of \$1.99. 

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## CCW Sell-Out

Once again, the initiative to allow currently serving and honorably retired police officers to carry guns off duty wherever they go in the country is returning to Capitol Hill. Will it pass this time? Not if certain police bosses have anything to say about it.

IACP, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, opposes the legislation vehemently. So does PERF, the Police Executive Research Forum. Both groups have, for years, mouthed the lines of the Brady Bunch. What's sad in this case is in the name of some bland political-correctness, their position adversely impacts both officer safety and public safety.

No one can argue against the concept that America's police are in the front lines of homeland security. It has been estimated that between the travel and vacation time of currently serving police, and the many good years left in ex-cops because it's an early-retirement profession, passing this legislation would put the equivalent of a million and a half more armed and trained cops on the street. Who could say this would be a bad idea?

Really, only two entities. One is the head-in-the-sand zealot of gun banning who flatly assumes all guns are wrong for any purpose. The other is, apparently, a certain breed of police chief who either doesn't trust his own personnel and his own kind, or is utterly clueless as to the issues.

What's the excuse for a police leader who opposes this obviously much-needed legislation? *Gun Week* (3/20/03) quotes



*Regular qualifications are written into the proposed laws that would allow nationwide off-duty carry by current and retired cops.*

North Miami Police Chief William Berger as saying, "It's hard enough to keep track of the people in our own departments, let alone people we don't even know are in our communities." Wow, Chief Berger, there's a slap in the face to the men and women of your department, and of other departments whose personnel work in, or pass through, your community. Sworn personnel of City of Miami PD, Miami-Dade Police, Florida Highway Patrol and countless Feds carry their duty and off-duty guns through North Miami daily, Chief; have you told them you feel a need to "keep track" of them?

## OPPORTUNITY FOR TRAGEDY?

Out of town cops carrying guns in other communities "dramatically elevates opportunities for tragedy" according to IACP analyst Gene Voegtlin. This is bogus on its face. In case the spokesman doesn't know, in virtually every jurisdiction in the United States, sworn officers can carry off duty anywhere in their own state, not just their own city and county. There has been no "elevated opportunity for tragedy" in the more than century-long history of institutionally armed police being able to carry anywhere in the state where they work. If tragedies aren't happening a couple of hundred miles from the officer's primary jurisdiction when carrying off duty, then guess what: they won't start happening a couple of thousands of miles from there, either. Duh.

Many of the chiefs who oppose this legislation say they don't want it "because of liability." Depending on their motivation, that's either ignorant or craven. It's ignorant if they don't realize that a cop empowered by Federal legislation to carry a gun while vacationing in another state would present little if any liability risk to the agency that employs him. This is because, outside his jurisdiction, he is no longer "acting under color of law" as an officer of that department if he gets involved in an off-duty shooting. In short, a cop in this situation would bring less lawsuit potential to his department and the community they both serve than an off-duty (let alone on-duty) shooting on his home turf.

And, if the chief objects to his officers being better able to protect themselves 24/7 because he's afraid of being sued, it's blatantly self-serving. The relationship of supervisor to subordinate is in many ways similar to the relationship of parent to child. There is an absolute responsibility to provide maximum security. It is well known that vengeful ex-cons have hunted down the cops who busted them. A chief who deliberately impairs his officers' right to defend themselves in such situations because he doesn't want any lawsuits coming across his nice mahogany desk has abrogated his responsibilities.

And a commander who would do such a thing for such a reason is, quite simply, ethically unfit to command.



## Public Safety Issue

Contrast that with the collective voice of the rank and file, as expressed by Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) national president Chuck Canterbury, and reported in the 3/03 edition of *American Police Beat*. "It's an officer safety issue," he says flatly, "and after September 11, it has become a public safety issue."

Under the past presidencies of Dewey Stokes and Dick Boyd, FOP was as anti-gun as IACP and PERF. Subsequent presidents Gil Gallegos, the late Steve Young, and now Chuck Canterbury got FOP out of the gun control business and back in the business of protecting the police. The guys with the stars on their uniform collars need to do the same. Unless IACP really stands for "I Ain't a Cop-Protector," if PERF isn't really just the first syllable in an all-caps rendition of PERFIDY, America's police chiefs will throw their support to House Resolution 218 and Senate bill 253, to authorize sworn and retired law enforcement officers to carry off-duty guns nationwide. For the safety of the police and of the public, it's simply the right thing to do.

**Screw Hollywood...**

**Here's The Jaw-Dropping, Super-Deadly Combat Secrets  
Of A Veteran D-Boy Who Had To Fight His Way Out Of A REAL...**

# “Black Hawk Down Combat Mission”

*By Jim Curley*

**Director, Spec Op Talent, TRS Combat Instruction Dept.**

Dear Friend,

Let's get right down to the nitty-gritty, okay?

Hollywood doesn't know it's ass from a hole in the ground when it comes to actual combat where people get killed. You can watch their dumb movies, have a good time, thrill to the special effects... but... if you ever fall into the trap that you're actually learning any real fighting secrets from the film...

**You're Gonna Get  
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Still, I want to thank Hollywood for at least reminding the entire world just **how bad-ass** U.S. Delta Force operatives are.

They're the best fighters on the planet. Spending five minutes with one of these guys (just talking about fighting) will change your life forever. You'll learn more in that five minutes than you would in five years in a dojo, learning fancy kicks and dancing around in your silly damn gi.

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ter combat fighting, and expert weaponry). He was trained as a weapons expert in the Green Beret. Twice decorated for Valor, and turned down the Silver Star because he was “just doing my job”. Given the Bronze Star anyway, with the “V”. A shy and super-effective hero, who kicks major league ass.

This guy has seen a ton of action. And in a battle in Central America, his Black Hawk helicopter went down in the jungle. Lost an engine during the action, dropped from 200 feet up down into the shit.

**And Here's Lesson Number One:** When danger bites you in the ass, you usually have **NO WARNING**. That's where any training you get about thinking fast, planning two steps ahead under stress, and acting with alertness comes in handy. Without this insight to actual fighting conditions, you simply will not survive.

Dale tossed his gear (including his weapons) and hung from the ceiling of the chopper as it fell 200 feet straight down. That quick thinking saved his life, and prevented broken bones. Of course, he then had to face potential jungle warfare bare-handed... but that's exactly what he's expert in.

Can't reveal what happened next, though. Classified. But you can pretty much guess. Dale's still here, still training operatives, FBI agents, SWAT cops and a few lucky civilians. He went into battle, did his job (and earned his Star)... and after 10 years, he's now ready to teach you.

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ing world when word got out that TRS was putting Dale's super-intense fight training on video.

**We were gonna just do some  
short films, concentrating on  
just a few secrets  
he wanted to reveal.**

Then came September 11, and everything has changed. We're no longer going to “dole out” information. We're offering everything we have, no holds barred.

This is the **BEST** and **MOST PRACTICAL** fighting information you will ever see. Ever. The only thing different from what actual Delta operatives get is that Dale understands you are not in the same peak shape most Delta guys are. So...

**He's Made This Fight Training  
As Simple As Possible.**

You don't need to be in shape to

*(Continued on next page...)*

## ADVERTISEMENT

“get it”. You can pick everything up FAST, too — in fact, just WATCHING these video sessions will “arm” you with fighting tactics and secrets that will change your life forever.

This really is a **SHORTCUT** to learning the most dangerous and practical hand-to-hand and weapons skills on the planet!

**Here’s what you get:** We have created 4 video sessions from the shoot we did with Dale. They are:

**“ALPHA” Tape #1:** The “basics” of everything you need for boosting your “face to face” fighting skills and street-combat awareness from zero to one hundred percent. Even if you’ve never trained before, never been in a fight, never had an aggressive thought in your life... this astonishing tape will give you the immediate skills to confront any dangerous situation, and do what’s necessary to survive and win. Amazing stuff you won’t find anywhere else. If you only see ONE fight-training video in your life... this is it. Includes:

- ✓ “Quick take out” moves and favorite D-boy targets on the body.
- ✓ How to keep your hands safe and unbroken during vicious hand-to-hand combat. (Most people have no idea how easily your hands can be broken during punches and take-downs... Dale teaches you how to put the hurt on your attacker quickly, without hurting yourself. Priceless real-combat secrets.)
- ✓ The Delta Force 7 Mindset principles you must “get” before any combat. Includes how to startle with quick, indignant anger... how to self-install the pitbull mentality to win at any cost... how to go for your objective with total decisiveness... how to think ahead and develop a plan under pressure... and more.
- ✓ Favorite stealth take-down techniques.
- ✓ Nerve strikes that short-circuit an attacker’s brain.
- ✓ How to defeat the “parking lot sucker punch”.
- ✓ What to NEVER do in a streetfight... and how to use your attacker’s own blood to shortcut your victory in any sudden fight.

✓ More...

**“BRAVO” Tape #2:** *Close Quarter Combat* — essentially, the battlefield tactics of bare-handed punching, kicking and trapping. You’ve never seen this kind of “one-step stopping” power moves before. Delta ops never want to spend more than 2 seconds taking anyone out, because they’re hell-bent on going through all obstacles and getting to their objective. For you, these skills erase all advantages experienced streetfighters have... and give you instant tactics to win any fight. Includes:

- ✓ The secret of combining 3 simple techniques in quick succession to end a fight.
- ✓ Hidden uses of palm-heel strikes. (Perfect for women and kids.)
- ✓ Snap kicks that will change an attacker’s mind fast and send him screaming away in pain and humiliation.
- ✓ Favorite Delta Muay Thai kicks. Easy, super-powerful, deadly.
- ✓ Combat head butt tactics that demolish opponents yet leave you clear-headed and ready for more action.
- ✓ Chokes, knee strikes, and instant take-down secrets you’ll never learn in a civilian dojo.
- ✓ More...

**“CHARLIE” Tape #3:** *Ground Fighting and Survival Tactics*. It’s all you need to know about ground fighting, from a guy who knows what he’s talking about. You seldom get to learn from someone who has had to use these “sudden take out” moves to save his own life. This is incredible instruction, the best you’ll ever see. Includes:

- ✓ Distraction secrets that open him up like he forgot what he was doing.
- ✓ “V” takedowns that instantly put you on top of his most vulnerable “saddle”. You OWN him from then on out.
- ✓ Take down a rushing attacker with simple, easy move.
- ✓ How to quickly recover from a fall when you’re surprised. (Not one streetfighter in a thousand knows this fast-recovery trick — you’ll be alert and back on top of him before he realizes he’s made a horrible mistake.)
- ✓ Exactly what to do when you’re on

the ground to win decisively... even experienced groundfighters will wonder why their usual shit doesn’t work on you. (Until they’re unconscious a second later.)

- ✓ Escapes, overcoming larger and heavier opponents who surprise you, tight-fight tricks (like airplane aisles and hallways in your house), more...

**“DELTA” Tape #4:** *Elite Forces Blade Skills*. Professional fighter secrets of using and defending against a knife and blunt-trauma weapons (including baseball bats, sticks, bottles, and everything else you’ll see in the street). Includes:

- ✓ Instant psychological advantages of showing him immediately that you understand knife fighting. (He’ll think twice, and lose all initiative.)
- ✓ How to fight when you can’t run from a knife. (Dale’s unique “ruthless, indignant anger” surprise will turn a fight around in a blink.)
- ✓ How to finish your attacker quickly... so you can get the hell out of there (in case he has buddies waiting).
- ✓ How to disrupt the nerve pathways of his weapon-bearing arm. Stun him quick, take him out before he can scream.
- ✓ Destroy his ability to fight with “motor dysfunction” destruction.
- ✓ How to disarm his weapon.
- ✓ Secrets of “linear weapons”... super-intense Delta elite-level training.
- ✓ Offensive knife tactics... when you take away his knife and suddenly hold the advantage.
- ✓ And much, much more...

So much more, in fact, that it would take me a dozen pages to even begin explaining any of it.

The thing is...

**This Is The BEST Fight Training Available... Yet It’s Simple And Easy To Learn FAST!**

Interested? We’ve been swamped with calls from professionals who have only heard about Dale’s tapes from the grapevine. They are DEMANDING we send them this training right away. I predict fulfilling these word-of-mouth orders will deplete most of our tapes. But I’ve set

## ADVERTISEMENT

aside some for dedicated guys like you!

**Here's the deal:** You get two choices here. You MUST get the Alpha Tape #1 — it's your "basic training" in Delta-style fighting. You will not be the same man after seeing this stuff.

You can add ONE of the other three tapes — either Bravo, Charlie or Delta — for our special "great deal" offer... both tapes for just \$69.

OR... you can get all four tapes... for just \$99. That's the BEST deal most guys are going for. It's an incredible offer and opportunity.

Either way — the 2 tapes for \$69 or all 4 for \$99 — you don't risk a penny. Because you get our mega-generous...

### 9 Month 100% Money-Back Guarantee!

**It works like this:** Order the tapes you want... check 'em out for 9 full months... and if you aren't happy, for any reason whatsoever... just return them (in any condition) for a fast refund. No questions asked. No hassles. Your word is gold.

A lot of other companies don't like to guarantee their training videos at all. That's nonsense, of course. We stand behind our stuff completely and without conditions. It's the best training material around — there must a couple of dozen Internet chat rooms devoted to our material, and our reputation among professional soldiers and cops is totally "thumbs up". Even many (but not all) of the top military honchos who used to despise us for releasing this stuff to civilians... now USE our videos and demand that their soldiers train with it, too.

**There's just one small catch:** You must HURRY! We've only duped a small number of these videos, and like I said... they're already selling out. I've ordered at least 80 packages (of all 4 videos) to be set aside for guys like you. I expect these to get snatched up pretty quick, so hurry, because there's no guarantee they'll be around here for more than a week or so.

**Here's what to do now:** Call our offices at **1-800-899-8153** and tell whoever answers you want the "Active Duty" tapes... then tell them which videos you want. You can use your credit card. If you want the "great deal" for just \$69, you get the Alpha tape, plus whichever of the other 3 you choose. (Either Bravo, Charlie, or Delta.) If you

want the "BEST deal", you get all four tapes... for only \$99.

Or, if you prefer to pay by check or money order, just fill out the Priority Order Form below, and mail it with your payment. Make any check or money order payable to TRS.

Simple as that. We'll ship your package right away.

**Do it today.** Yes, there is some serious urgency in this deal. Beside the limited number of tapes available... there is also your need to OWN this training. It will change your life. Yes, it's brutal and vicious... but that's the point, isn't it.

Don't wait. There's guarantee that the 80 videos I've duplicated for guys like you will be around for long.

Sincerely,

Jim Curley

**P.S. Remember,** you don't risk a penny by ordering today. You have 9 full months to decide if this training is really for you. If you're not happy, you will have not paid a cent for checking it all out for yourself.

**P.P.S.** I almost forgot... I have a **special FREE BONUS** for you here. It's a cassette tape interview with Dale on "Thinking Fast Under Stress". This is VERY cool "insider" info that only the

top soldiers and operatives ever get. The reason why so many black belts get their heads bashed in by street punks is because they are INDECISIVE when the situation turns nasty.

That's just human nature. We all hesitate under pressure. It can get you killed. Delta guys quickly learn how to stay alert when chaos hits, think slowly and clearly, and make GOOD decisions in a heartbeat. In this super-valuable cassette interview, Dale reveals all the inside tricks to staying calm and decisive during crunch time.

It's simple training that will save your life. You can listen to it in the car driving to work. (While everyone else is wasting their time singing along to the dumb radio.) It is just so cool to be able to install this dangerous, super-elite training into your body and brain this easily.

Anyway... the tape is yours free, to KEEP even if you later decide to return the videos for a complete refund. This is our gift to you, just for giving Dale a "look-see".

Again, though... you must hurry. These packages are just flying off the warehouse shelves... and because of other (secret) projects, we won't be able to dupe any more for months. So don't wait. Call **1-800-899-8153** right now and ask for Dale's "Active Duty" videos. And your free cassette tape interview.



## "Active Duty" Priority Order Form! For fastest service use your credit card and Call Toll-FREE **1-800-899-8153** (Dept AD-21)

**YES!** I want to see this amazing training for myself, risk-free! What a stunning opportunity to learn elite DELTA fighting skills, so fast and easily. I understand, too, that I have 9 full months to check this out for myself, and can quickly get a total refund of my purchase price simply by returning the tapes (in any condition). Here's what I want, and how I want to pay:

**GREAT DEAL** for just \$69 (plus \$7 S&H) Total: \$76.

"ALPHA" Tape #1 plus (choose ONE other tape):

"BRAVO" Tape #2  "CHARLIE" Tape #3  "DELTA" Tape #4

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J.D. Jones



Otis Kit

## FORGET THE KITCHEN SINK

I guess just this once I can write about what the boss wants me to write about, instead of some fire-breathing-monster-controversial-blood-letting (usually what he wants). Okay, I admit it, he is right in that not everyone has the travel/hunting experience to know the essentials to take on an expensive hunting trip to never-neverland.

From what I see, the average hunter — make that traveler — takes far too much gear, and frequently the wrong gear. Your guide, outfitter or professional hunter should be able to give you a comprehensive list of gear for his type of hunt and climate. The personal essentials are up to you. On a self-guided hunt — it's all up to you.

## THE ESSENTIALS

Prior to my first trip to never-neverland I have personal medical sources who research the area for any particular prevalent diseases and prescribe appropriate medication to take along. In many areas of Africa, tick fever is prevalent. It's similar to Lyme disease and not to be trifled with. A small, quality first aid kit can literally be a lifesaver. I missed my only chance to stitch up a doctor friend in Australia because he forgot the sutures. Bummer, sometimes I like sewing, but butterfly bandages had to do. Everyday medication should be in a very strong container with the prescription attached for the local custom's officer's convenience. And do not forget eyewash.

Before leaving clip all finger and toenails short and take the clipper with you. A small personal flashlight, like an AA Maglight for around the camp use, is handy. Another to carry — for extended night work — is one of the SureFire-type compact lights. Include a filter that shows blood brightly. Their new AVAITOR model with LED, combined with a bright light, looks like it might do both jobs. Take enough batteries. A small lightweight pocketknife is essential too. Currently, I carry a very light Beretta with a serrated 2" blade.

In most places sunscreen is essential. It's not sissy — use it. Sunglasses should be considered. Extra prescription glasses in a strong case are a must. Carry moleskin for those blisters as soon as they begin to be noticeable. A couple aspirin in your pocket can make a day much more enjoyable, as headaches are common in the sun and outdoors. Ditto a Band-Aid or two. Baby wipes and Campho-Phenique go a long way toward making raw spots more comfortable.

Travel, jet lag, sore muscles, overtiredness and uncomfortable sleeping conditions play hell with the ability to sleep for some people. Prescription sleeping pills should be taken and used if necessary. Individuals without adequate sleep become zombies in a few days — not fun. A cheap, luminous dial or illuminated watch with large numbers is quite handy. Leave your rings, expensive watches and six-pound gold neck chains at home.

In some countries a wash cloth and towel are considered personal items and you must furnish them yourself. In some places, desirable goods are highly preferred to \$\$\$ for tips. Your outfitter can advise you on this.



## Gun Stuff

Always take an extra gun and an extra scope. Cycle all ammunition through the firearm prior to leaving. A good idea with factory ammo — essential with handloads. Don't load to absolute max — reliable functioning is more important than that last 100 fps. If you think differently, get a bigger gun and don't load to max. Take a small jointed cleaning rod or an OTIS cleaning kit along to knock out a case stuck in a chamber. A grain or two of sand in the chamber can cause a stuck case. It did to my 14.5 MM Russian semiauto rifle during a military demo last year, and it took a hammer to open it.

When leaving the country register all firearms with customs prior to departing. Ditto for expensive foreign-made binoculars or cameras. The aftermath of the 9-11 attack made big changes in customs requirements.

Last — but definitely not least — is a very strong diarrhea medication. Ask your doctor. You may be going to an area, even in the US, that has bugs your immune system has never encountered.

Just remember to be self-reliant for all the essentials and you'll do well and have a much more enjoyable hunt.



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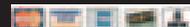
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BH02



# TAFFIN TESTS

John Taffin

**THE SIXGUNNER  
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## A REAL SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL



*The finished project complete with Colt cylinder, 7.5" Great Western barrel, and pre-war stag grips.*

### GREAT WESTERN'S CLASSIC 'COLT'

I had only been in the gun show for a few minutes when I spotted it. There on the first table, in the second aisle, was the first sixgun to really catch my eye. It was a 7.5" Single Action replica, however it was not of Italian lineage, but rather the original copy of the Colt Single Action Army. The Great Western Frontier revolver was manufactured totally of American parts, in Los Angeles in the late 1950s and early 1960s. When the first Great Western surfaced around 1954, Colt had not yet decided to resume production of the Single Action Army that had been dropped in 1941.

Great Westerns were offered in the standard barrel lengths of 4.75", 5.5" and 7.5" and mostly in calibers .45 Colt, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, .44 Special and .22 Long Rifle. They looked so much like Colts that an original Colt was used in the early advertising. There are subtle differences in the shape of the trigger guard and overall grip frame, while the front of the hammer, when cocked, looks like an upside-down "L" since the firing pin is mounted in the frame. Great Westerns were very popular



*Gun show find — a Great Western movie gun.*

in both movies and TV shows, and used extensively by fast draw artists of the time. They were also destined for an ignoble death when Colt resumed production of the real Single Action in 1956.

The gun show Great Western had seen better days. The 7.5" barrel was marked

*Continued on page 88*



### TEST-FIRING THE SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIAL 7.5" .45 COLT

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|---------------------------------|-----|-------------------|
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| PMC 250 RNFP                    | 685 | 1 1/8"            |
| UltraMax 200 RNFP               | 685 | 1 1/8"            |
| Oregon Trail 255/8.0 gr. Unique | 759 | 1 1/8"            |
| RCBS #45-270/17.0 gr. XMR5744   | 775 | 1"                |

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The American Legend





# HANDGUN LEATHER

Cameron Hopkins

FROM CLASSICS  
TO CUTTING-EDGE  
IN CARRY METHODS

## THAT '70s SHOW

Looking back on the '70s, we find the holster industry was stuck in a wagon rut, rolling along smoothly but unable to make a turn. Everything was conventional, staid, safe.

Stagnant times like these provide ideal conditions for innovators and entrepreneurs to step forward with breakout products and new technologies. Think Hewlett, think Packard.

In the leather business, think Bianchi, think Perkins. John Bianchi, a Monrovia, Calif., police officer and Neale Perkins, the founder of Safariland, both broke out of the holster rut during the early '70s with a totally new approach to police duty holsters and their accoutrements.

Rick Gallagher, founder of Jackass Leather, which became Galco International, was another '70s holstermaker who threw off the ox yoke of conformity to become one of the new holster breed.

So the '70s weren't just "Stairway To Heaven" and bellbottoms. It was the single most significant decade of change in the holster business since Sam Colt first brought forth the need for such a thing.



## The Budget-Minded Cop

If the '70s were the right time for change in the holster business, the police locker room was the place. John Bianchi was a cop who took to making holsters for his compadres, mostly because he worked out of his garage and his holsters were cheap.

Matt Del Fatti, a retired deputy sheriff who is now the one-man in the one-man shop of Matt Del Fatti Leather, was also a '70s cop who took up the awl and needle to make duty rigs in his garage. "Cops," says the good natured ex-deputy who now makes holsters full-time, "as a general rule are fairly cheap."

Del Fatti retired from the Clark County (Wisc.) Sheriff's Office as the Chief Deputy after 28 years behind a badge and now devotes himself to a custom holster business specializing in concealed carry rigs.

When asked to succinctly describe the one thing setting his custom leather apart from other makers, Del Fatti deadpanned, "Custom. True custom. Not custom-because-that's-good-marketing custom, but actual, true custom."

A lot of so-called custom shops don't truly make one-of-a-kind, special order holsters. They have a menu of options — choice of color, material, rake, with or without thumb snap — but very few actually tailor make a rig just for one customer.

"That's not what I say I am, that's what I do," Del Fatti insisted. "The only reason I have a brochure is because people need a starting point."

Del Fatti can make anything — that's the definition of custom — so if you want an ostrich skin shoulder holster for your Broomhandle Mauser, call Matt.

## A Short Stack Of Blueberry Holsters

Del Fatti's main fare consists of concealment rigs, most of which are pancake styles for autos and revolvers. "The pancake is still a good all-around holster," Del Fatti says.

The model Del Fatti calls his LP is a classic pancake featuring a beautifully hand-boned fit of the top-grain cowhide. Double stitching reinforces the stress points and the twin belt slots are custom cut for the customer's belt width. The LP can be ordered for either autos or revolvers, with a straight drop or a slight cant. Again, everything Del Fatti does is custom, so feel free to order, say, 12.78 degrees of rake with iguana trim.

Other pancake designs incorporate quick-release belt snaps for the CCW holder who might wish to remove his roscoe at the office. There's also a

selection of matching mag pouches, speed loader holders, flashlight-mag combo pouches and hand-cuff pouches.

The primary material is cowhide. Del Fatti snickers at the prevailing trend of horsehide and with it an escalated price for the "exotic" material. "Horsehide costs significantly less than cowhide, yet everyone charges more. Marketing is a wonderful thing," laughs the Wisconsinite.

Del Fatti's holsters are remarkably affordable for the quality and one-man-shop fabrication. Most models are in the \$80 to \$95 bracket with a few crossing the Ben Franklin threshold at \$105 to \$115. No doubt a double Buscadero



made of spitting cobra for a matched pair of French dueling pistols might run a tad more.



For more information, contact Matt at (715) 267-6420; e-mail: [delfatti@tds.net](mailto:delfatti@tds.net)

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# BETTER SHOOTING

Dave Anderson

## SHOOTING TIPS FROM TOM CAMPBELL

**T**om Campbell is one of the outstanding competitive shooters of the last quarter century, consistently among the top shooters at major matches, including IPSC world shoots, USPSA nationals, the Bianchi Cup and the Steel Challenge. After a long career with S&W Campbell is currently with Safariland.

Long after other top shooters had switched to compensated .38 Supers and optical sights, Campbell stayed with his non-compensated, iron-sighted S&W .45 — and still managed to finish near the top. Campbell believes shooters need to develop sound, basic shooting skills. He deplores current trends to abandon marksmanship in favor of high-round count, close range speed-shoots. Here, he offers some tips on the shooting grip and accuracy training.

"A common mistake with new shooters is to hold the gun down low, with the thumb curled down and a little space between the web of the hand and the tang of the grip. Here's how I grip the pistol with my strong hand. The pistol's barrel is in line with the forearm. The hand is as high as possible on the gun, with the web of the hand pressed hard against the tang, and the middle finger pressed against the bottom of the trigger guard. With a 1911-style pistol the thumb rides the thumb safety. With any type of pistol, I like to have the thumb about in line with the barrel. The tip of the trigger finger is squarely across the face of the trigger."



"For the two-hand grip, wrap the fingers of the weak hand around the shooting hand. Like the shooting hand, the support hand should be high on the gun, with the index finger wedged tightly against the bottom front of the trigger guard. The base of the support hand is tight against the left grip panel, thumb pointing forward in line with the barrel. I grip the gun hard, too. When I release the gun after gripping it for a few seconds, the checkering of the grip panels is impressed into my hand. I have pictures and videos of most of the top shooters in action. During the few seconds when the gun is actually being fired, you can see from the way the muscles stand out in their forearms, they are really locked down hard on the gun."



"Too many shooters want to run before they've learned to walk. If you can't fire one accurate shot slowly, you sure can't fire two accurate shots fast. I practice more at 25 yards and out than at closer ranges. Practice one-shot draws at 25 yards. To hit consistently you have to do everything right; the draw, grip, stance, sight alignment, trigger control. Work until you can shoot ten consecutive A-zone hits in 2.5 seconds per draw. Then cut the time to two seconds per draw."

## Trivia

- Campbell is one of the few top shooters who doesn't reload. He reportedly fired \$70,000 worth of Federal .45 ACP ammunition in one year.

- Prior to a world shoot Campbell and Mike Plaxco, both U.S. Gold Team members, were practicing at Plaxco's shooting facility. Visiting the reloading room one evening, Plaxco persuaded Campbell to give one pull on the handle of the Dillon 1000 loading machine. It's the only cartridge he's ever loaded.





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# REALITYCHECK

Clint Smith

FIRST-PERSON  
THOUGHTS ON  
SURVIVING IN  
THE REAL WORLD

## Cut, Burned and Shot?

In reality, firearms safety is probably an oxymoron when one discusses those everyday events called life. Firearms are, in fact, designed to do two things. One, to stop someone from attacking my family, my partner or myself. Two, to hunt or shoot something I intend to eat. The most logical place to apply *safety* correctly would be in the middle of a fight. If I can do it well there, I could do it anywhere else, at home or at the range.

So if we know what the firearm safety rules are, why is it we keep shooting ourselves and others? And to set the record straight, many people — civilians, police and military — have had negligent or accidental weapons discharges. So let's put firearms safety in perspective with some other dangerous things we deal with on a daily basis.



By Sequoia Blankenship

**All of you have been burned.**

**All of you have been cut.**

**All of you have not been shot.**

**Live the safety rules –  
so we don't qualify for the  
last category.**

## FIRE & KNIVES

Fire is taken for granted in today's high-tech world, yet, it's hard to find anything on earth held more highly in regard. Don't think much of fire? Here's an image for you: We are sitting together, I take a stick match, strike it, and as the blue sulfur bulb bursts into flame, I reach over to touch your hand with the glowing flame. You look at me like I'm from Mars, "Are you nuts or what?" And probably, if you're smart, you'll have moved your hand. And why do we hold fire in high regard? We've all been burned.

Long before guns, steel ruled the planet. Even with the advent of firearms, steel continued to hold a place of honor on the battlefield. As late as the Korean War, bayonet charges heaped laurels upon the officers and men who carried them out. What of steel? Why the interest in the Tueller drill, in which a threat can cover the allotted



ground with steel before most can deploy the firearm? Why? Because even if shot well, many threats continue to fight — and at arm's length a knife never runs out of ammunition.

Don't think much of steel? Here's an image for you. We're sitting together at the table and I whip out a pocketknife. As I lean across and place the blade over your hand, said-hand will probably be smartly withdrawn as you yet again ponder: "What, are you nuts or something?" See, I told you we hold steel in high regard. *Everyone* reading this has been cut: paper cut, shaving cut, cleaning a deer cut or just messing around with a knife cut. If you see steel and you are smart, you'll back up.

## guns

I venture to say, without much reservation, at least once in every class I teach I see someone cover themselves — or someone else — with the muzzle of a firearm. As you call them to task on it the often-heard reply is "Oh don't worry, it's not loaded."

I sincerely believe the reason we have such a casual attitude toward guns and gun handling is the fact almost everyone has *never* been shot before. Trust me, you can tell the people in class who have been shot. Here's a concept: If everyone signing-up for a class did the initial signing-up for a class did the initial paper work, and then we lined them up on the porch and shot them in the leg — after the hospital visit — the class would start and I believe there would be a

whole different attitude about gun handling. The reason we are careless with firearms is because the majority of people have never been shot.

Applying logic, if some idiot puts you down-range in a course of instruction to have other students shoot around you — or shoot targets you were holding — in the name of getting you "acclimated to incoming fire" he is a fool, and so are you for doing it. I have seen plenty of accidental discharges where projectiles went down-range during just regular handling, loading and firing drills. "Oops, sorry I shot you in the head, it was an accident." What happened to auditory exclusion? What happened to you never hear the round that hits you? What happened to "I didn't hear the rifle go off when I shot the trophy elk while under the influence of an adrenalin dump?" At the minimum? If you do this goofy stuff — make sure your instructor has verifiable insurance.



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# THE SIXGUNNER

John Taffin

Photo courtesy of John Taffin

## THE SIXGUNS OF ELMER KEITH



### HELL, HE WAS THERE!



Keith's four favorite packin' S&W .44's. Leather by Milt Sparks, George Lawrence, and Ed Bohlin.

It's difficult to believe Elmer has been gone for nearly 20 years now. This probably means many of the newer readers, unless they are willing to go back and do some research, don't even know who he was. He was born in 1899 in Missouri, moved to Montana as a young boy with his parents, then on to Oregon, then the rustic homestead on the Salmon River in Idaho, and finally spent the last three decades of his life in Salmon, Idaho. He was Elmer Keith, and for nearly 60 years was the voice of big-bore sixgunning.

Keith started his career with a .45 Colt, and in fact, one of his first articles recounted his blowing up of an old black powder .45 Colt Single Action. After that experience, he looked for a stronger sixgun, which proved to be the .44 Special. From late 1929, with his article in the *The American Rifleman* entitled "The Last Word," until 1955, Keith promoted the .44 Special as the ideal sixgun cartridge when used with



Three of Keith's custom Single Action Colts: (top to bottom) a 7.5" .44 Special, a 4.5" .45 Colt, and the famous "#55A", a 5.5" .44 Special.

his "Keith" bullet, Lyman's #429421. This bullet, a semi-wadcutter weighing 250 grains, was pushed at 1,100 fps using #80 powder and then, when it became available, with Hercules #2400 for a full 1,200 fps.

His writings in many articles, books

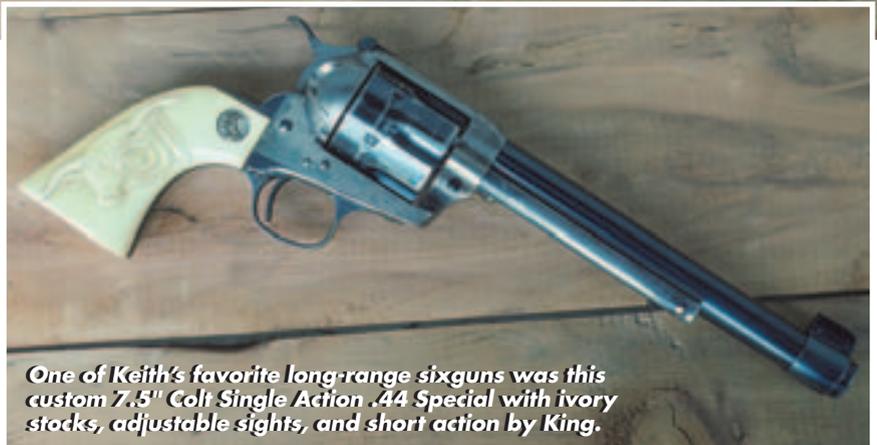
and letters on the .44 Special, gained followers all over the world, many of whom became members of "The .44 Associates" sharing loading data with each other on a regular basis. He also urged the ammunition companies to load the .44 Special to his specifica-

Keith's double action .44's: (left to right) 4.5" .44 Magnum, a pair of 4" .44 Magnums, 4" .44 Special. All wear specially carved ivory stocks, and all are fully engraved except one plain blue "workin' gun", a 4" .44 Magnum.



tions, however, they were afraid of some of the older guns. He countered with the idea of lengthening the case just as had been done with the .38 Special to make the .357 Magnum.

Finally someone listened. Remington and Smith & Wesson combined forces in 1955 to produce the first .44 Magnum loading and the Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum — now known as The Model 29. Keith asked for a sixgun and load combination of a 250 grain bullet at 1,200 fps. He would have been satisfied with that, however even he did not know what the .44 Special was capable of. When the new .44 Special Magnum became reality it was a 240 grain bullet at a full 1,400 fps, and Keith could not have been happier. He did not invent the .44 Magnum as some have asserted. He



One of Keith's favorite long-range sixguns was this custom 7.5" Colt Single Action .44 Special with ivory stocks, adjustable sights, and short action by King.

was however, directly responsible for its appearance. From late 1955 until his stroke in 1981, he was rarely found without a .44 Magnum on his hip.

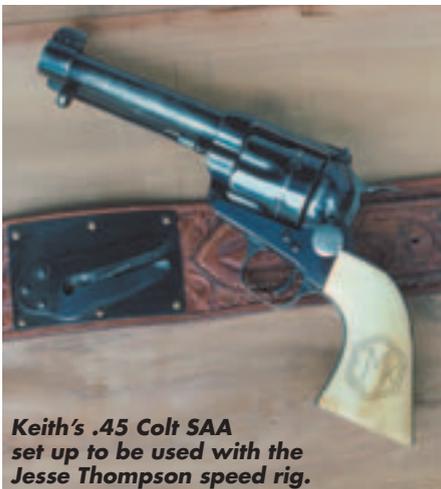
### The Man's Guns

Over the years Keith always featured his sixguns in his articles, and as a

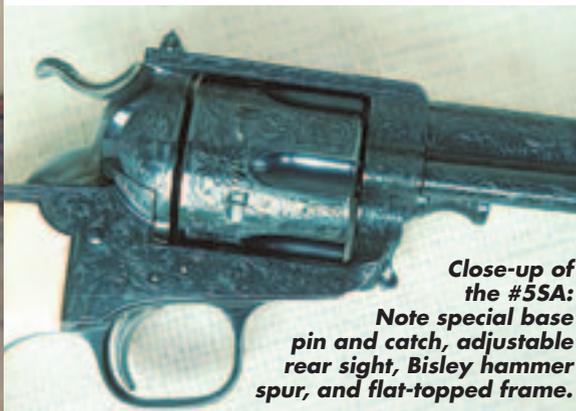
teenager I purchased a copy of *Sixguns by Keith* and proceeded to spend many hours carefully studying the pictures of his many custom sixguns — all with the impossible hope that someday I too would own such guns. After I met Keith for the first time, he supplied me with a list of all of his old sixgun articles from

*The American Rifleman* and I was able to add all of those to my file. Most of his sixguns were customized, especially when it came to grips. He preferred specially carved ivory grips and also enlisted the help of some of the top gunsmiths and engravers in the country to customize his sixguns. In the 1980s I had the good fortune of not only handling all of his sixguns, I was also able to photograph them. I share some of them now with you.

One of his early favorites  
*Continued on page 101*



Keith's .45 Colt SAA set up to be used with the Jesse Thompson speed rig.



Close-up of the #55A: Note special base pin and catch, adjustable rear sight, Bisley hammer spur, and flat-topped frame.



Ken Hackathorn

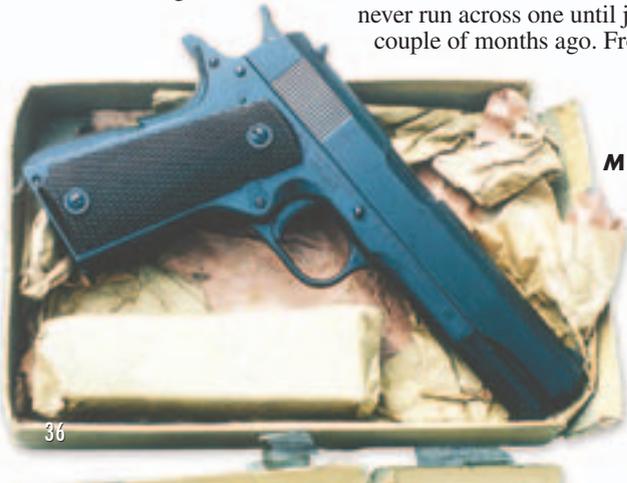
## 1911 = HARLEY DAVIDSON

**F**rom time to time, readers of *American Handgunner* complain about the excessive coverage the 1911 pistol receives in our pages. It's always interesting to read about different handguns, but the fact is the 1911 pistol is much like the Harley Davidson motorcycle in the USA. Both are uniquely American. To many owners, each represents strength and power — both things Americans love — and both tend to be customized once the owner takes possession. Like the Harley, the 1911 can be modified with minor details to establish the owner's personal touch, or if one wishes, rude amounts of money can be spent making them "better." Whining about the coverage 1911 pistols get in *Handgunner* is much like doing the same in a motorcycle magazine. Yeah, there are Japanese and German bikes that are top-flight, but you might as well get used to reading about Harley Davidson motorcycles.

## Cheap Shall Not Mean Good

**W**ith my fondness for the 1911 pistol, I often add another to my pile when opportunity permits. Recently, a couple pistols have come my way worth telling about. First, is a superb custom 1911 .45 ACP built by Scott Mulkerin of SDM Fabricating. This finely crafted pistol is built on a Caspian frame and slide kit. It represents what most would call a full-house combat .45 auto. Besides being beautifully fitted, finished in nice hard chrome lower and blued upper, this pistol sports unique "snake-skin" texture to the front-strap and mainspring housing. The slide grasping groove area is also done with this snakeskin surface. Scott fitted a 24-carat gold bead to the front sight that really stands out and gives me an easy to see front sight. I now need bifocals to see anything clearly at arms length, and this sight, combined with a Novak U-notch rear, really works for me. The final pistol is a joy to shoot and use, and promotes pride of ownership.

My next prize 1911 pistol to come my way is a M1911A1 GI Colt .45 auto, manufactured in December of 1944. For most of my gun-owning life I have heard stories of a GI .45 auto new in the box being available, like the unicorn I have heard of many, but never run across one until just a couple of months ago. From one



**GI Colt M1911A1 pistol.**

## Can't Have Too Many

**W**hen I am asked about the utility of owning a 1911 pistol as a self defense sidearm I always make the point that owning one requires the owner be properly trained and skilled with the manual of arms for a cocked and locked carry mode. If you take care of your sidearm the same way you take care of your lawn mower, you may be better off with a Glock. However, if you don't mind keeping your pistol clean and properly lubricated, a good 1911 is hard to beat.

I love to make the statement, "The 1911 pistol is the worlds finest close-quarters combat weapon," in my training program followed with the comment, "and King of feed-way stopages." I have to admit I see more 1911 pistols choke than most other modern designs. A good 1911 is a great thing — a bad one is like a nagging wife. In the circles I travel, those who use 1911 pistols make sure they work flawlessly. If they don't, they're either fixed or someone else ends up owning it. There are a number of really good 1911s on the market today, but remember, you tend to get what you pay for. A "good cheap" 1911 doesn't seem to really exist.



**Custom M1911 .45 pistol from SDM Manufacturing.**

of the "Greatest Generation," this pistol is unfired in the original box. The box is falling apart, but after 58 years one can expect only so much from cardboard.

The pistol is nicely fitted, has a very serviceable trigger/sear release, and came with two spare magazines wrapped in the original paper. What struck me the most about this pistol is it is the original "tactical M1911." It served so well as a close-quarters fighting weapon that it was not replaced until 1985. The main issue with replacing the 1911 as the US service pistol was that supplies of .45 pistols were in terrible shape, none having been acquired since 1945. These pistols were worn out. Today, the USMC is looking into bids for 750 new MEUSOC M1911 .45 pistols, and the U.S. Army's elite Operational Detachment Delta uses custom 1911 .45 pistols. LAPD SWAT just chose the Kimber 1911 as its handgun of choice, plus FBI SWAT team members pack custom Springfield Armory 1911 pistols as well.

Maybe some *Handgunner* readers get tired of hearing about the 1911 .45 pistol, and I suppose Honda riders get edgy when Americans allow their chest to swell when they say "Harley Davidson." I say get over it and get used to it. It's part of America.



For more info contact, SDM Fabricating; [www.sdmfabricating.com](http://www.sdmfabricating.com)

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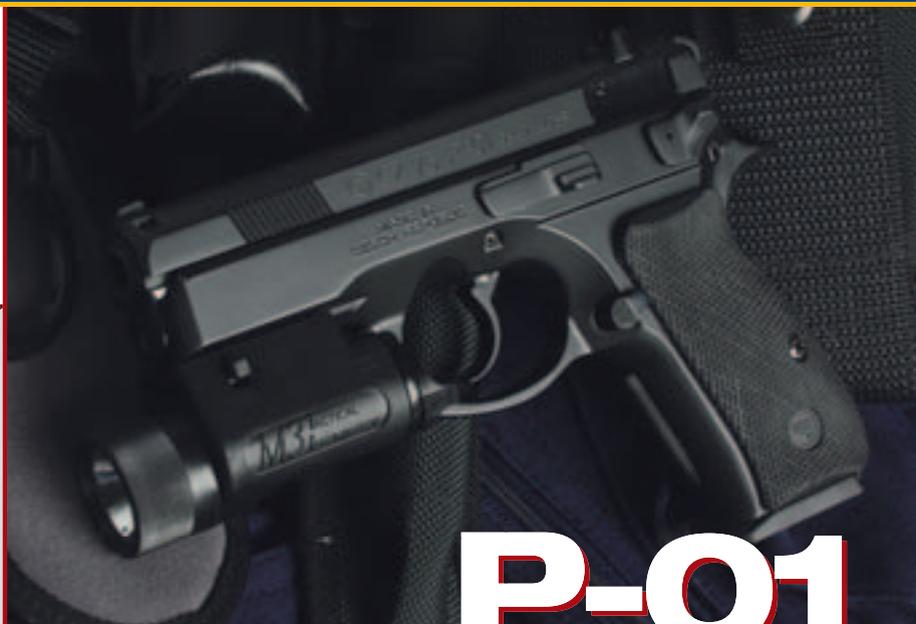
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# THE 10-RING

Commander Gilmore

STUPID  
CROOKS AND  
BUNGLING  
BANDITS

## They're Trying Really Hard To Look Stern

**P**olice investigators in Tallahassee, Florida, told Katrese Forbes that she should never, ever try to hit an armed robber "because of the potential for a violent reaction." She's wondering if they shouldn't warn armed robbers not to mess with people's mommas because of the potential for a violent reaction. And the cops, they're trying not to let on how tickled they are with Katrese.

Katrese and her mother had met for dinner at a Tallahassee fast-food restaurant and were just leaving, walking to their respective cars, when Katrese heard something and turned to look at her mother. Mom had just gotten into her car, and some guy wearing a stocking cap over his face was beating on her window with a handgun, yelling at her to open the door.

By the way — Nobody messes with Katrese's momma...

Katrese took off for the crook, who

was busy trying to bust out the window. When he caught a glimpse of The Crazy Avenger swoopin' up on him, he turned and pointed the pistol at her. Brave but not stupid, Katrese put on the binders and screeched to a halt. Momma, seeing that the gun was now pointed at Katrese, leaned on the horn and just about scared the carjacker into next Tuesday. When he came back down from his standing high-jump (and before he could check his pants for bypass), he whipped back around and RE-pointed the gun at Momma. That gave Katrese about the point-zero-two seconds she needed to cover those last two long steps, bring a right-cross all the way around from the outfield bleachers, an' clip the Crime King smack on the jaw, droppin' him like a bad habit.

Dastardly Dan sprang back up to a scramble and started makin' tracks for Georgia, but not before Katrese caught up to him and landed a couple more hay-makers on his noggin. The police scooped his bruised self up a short time later. We believe there is some slight possibility that a cop or two might have spilled the beans around the jailhouse, that the Big Bad Carjacker got punched out and chased off by a girl. Just a hunch, you understand.

## GANG WARFARE AT ITS WORST

**O**r maybe just its smelliest. In the northeastern part of Turkey, national police are handing out free ammunition and asking citizens to help fight back against gangs of looting and pillaging fiends. Instructions are to shoot to kill, without warning. And they're losing the fight — to marauding mobs of pigs.

The Anatolian news agency reported that due to fierce weather conditions and destruction of natural food sources, the region has experienced an unprecedented swine invasion. Hundreds of wild boar were reported making raids into cities and towns, breaking down garden walls, even breaking into buildings and eating whatever they can find. Extra police were dispatched to the area, but were outnumbered by the pigs hundreds to one, and the cops simply couldn't shoot enough of them. Besides, they pointed out, the feral pigs are big, tough, fearless and nasty. Typically, it takes a lot more than one handgun round to bring 'em down. Too, the vast majority of the population is Muslim, and forbidden to eat pork, so there's no food interest in the big tuskers. If you're big on bacon and have the money to travel, you might make a vacation out of it.

## BONE-DUMB STUPID, OR JUST MISERABLY INCOMPETENT?

**W**ell, there's also the choice of "Really, Really Bad Luck." For 61-year old bank robber Edward Blaine Norton, strike one was called when he fled from committing an armed robbery of the Union Bank & Trust north of Richmond, Va. Having failed to secure his bag o' loot properly, Eddie left a trail of fluttering \$100 bills in his wake.

Strike two was called when he reached his getaway car and found he had locked his keys inside. Bystanders didn't know he had just robbed a bank at that point, but they figured a guy who's leaking large-denomination currency, screaming, and beating on the window of a car with a big stick prob'ly wasn't up to any good. Several locals moved in to wrangle him, and Eddie took off running.

Strike three came when the posse tackled Eddie and brought him down. Whilst being mugged and hornswoogled, Eddie managed to reach into his pocket, pull out his pistol, and shoot himself in the leg. Not to be upstaged by a nutcase, one of the posse whopped out his own roscoe and shot Eddie again. That pretty much settled Ed's schedule for the day. Twilight found him double-dotted, locked down in the hospital, and charged with eight felonies, including armed robbery and two counts of attempted murder. Eddie is said to be "despondent" over the entire affair.

## HE HADN'T GOTTEN TO "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL" YET



**I**n October 2002, in Bridgeport, Conn., 34-year old Roger Chimney pled guilty to armed robberies of two convenience stores. Police had pretty good ID evidence on him anyway, but the case was kinda clinched by a personal possession Roger accidentally dropped at the scene of the second heist: His bible, inscribed inside with his name.



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rust-proof and equipped with excellent adjustable sights as well as quick detachable scope rings, the SBH Hunter is justly popular.

Perhaps the sexiest handgun to appear on dealer's shelves this past year is the Kimber Eclipse Custom II. This two-tone stainless beauty is shattering sales records for 1911 pistols. The Eclipse Custom II not only looks great, it'll make you look good as you examine that tight group on your target. Careful, close-tolerance construction and hand fitting where needed are the reasons for its outstanding accuracy and reliability.

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# HANDLOADING

Charles E. Petty

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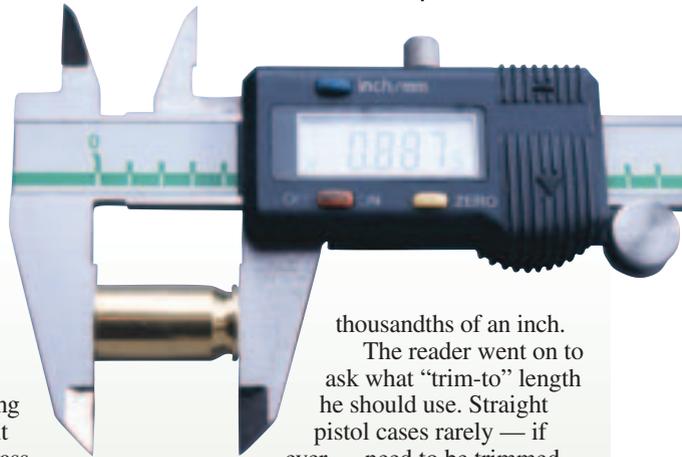
## Squeezing Makes It Bigger

**W**e got an e-mail from a reader who had noticed the length of his brass changed with firing and sizing. He was concerned about trimming the cases and what to do about the problem.

Of course the answer is he doesn't have a problem at all. Every time a cartridge is fired the case length will shrink a bit and when it's resized it will grow right back — usually to where it was before. It simply has to do that. When a cartridge is fired it expands out to contact the chamber wall and provide the seal that makes all fixed cartridges work. If it didn't seal the chamber, gas would escape out the back and we'd get a face-full every time we fired a shot. Since the

length is the only dimension free to change, it does. Think about one of those oblong balloons kids love. If you squeeze it in the middle the length increases, quit squeezing and it goes back to wherever it was. The only difference is brass doesn't go all the way back. We have to help it along with a sizing die.

Just for grins I measured ten once-fired Federal cases that had all been shot in the same pistol. Their average length was .888" which happens to be the exact minimum length shown in the SAAMI standards (.898-.888). They were resized and measured again. The average this time was .893", so the cases had "grown" by five



thousandths of an inch.

The reader went on to ask what "trim-to" length he should use. Straight pistol cases rarely — if ever — need to be trimmed.

It's a practical thing because we almost always either lose them or beat up the rim so badly the case should be discarded before they get to be long enough to cause any sort of trouble. There is no good evidence to prove that normal case length variations have an effect on accuracy. And with the taper crimp, a variation of a few thousandths in length won't matter either.

## Bogus Headspace Baloney



*Cylinder & Slide custom Para.*

**A**nother writer took me to task over my statement from a previous column that the .45 ACP can't headspace on the case mouth because of the relative lengths of case and chamber. Much as I hate being wrong — I was.

In the industry standards both maximum case length and minimum chamber depth are the same at .898", so while they don't meet, the rimless straight case can go into the chamber as far as it needs to reach the shoulder. My erroneous conclusion was based on the fact the extractor holds the rim, which is true. What I overlooked was the difference between the extractor hook width and the thickness of the rim. This dimension allows for normal variations of case length and lets the case mouth touch the shoulder. Now if we had a case that was markedly shorter than usual, the extractor would come into play, but the gun would still work.

One thing we hear is that headspace problems can lead to poor accuracy. My mentor, Bob Day, built a fixture to test stuff like this and there was no significant change in accuracy until headspace got to the point the round wouldn't fire. And, speaking of mythology,

most of the other stuff about .45 brass doesn't hold up to real testing either. We are told to always use brass from the same maker and production lot. I just love it when the Tappet Brothers yell, "booooguus" — 'cause it is.

I took 100 rounds of once-fired brass from the same lot and another 100 from my practice brass that included cases from four different manufacturers (25 each) that had been used an unknown number of times and with random case lengths. They were all loaded in one session with a load that has proven to be wonderfully accurate (6.2 gr. Power Pistol with the Remington 185 gr. JSWC). The mixed-brass lot was just tossed together and mixed up but no other selection was made. All were shot from the Ransom Rest using a bullseye gun known to be capable of "X" ring accuracy at 50 yards. That's 10, 10-shot groups with each batch and, actually, the mixed brass bunch had an average about .1" smaller. But that isn't *better* and such is the nature of testing variability that if we repeated the test the results might flip-flop. If I had seen a difference of an inch, I'd be telling a different story.

The writer who pointed out my error — quite rightly — also said accuracy was poor when headspace varied. Maybe his was, but I haven't found that to be the case. Of course, the flaw here is there is no standard definition of *poor*. I'm used to working with accurized bullseye guns that often put 10 shots into an inch or at 25 yards. So my view of *poor* accuracy is going to be different from someone who uses a stock gun as a benchmark.

So, how do I deal with being technically wrong and practically right? Headspace is rarely an issue in automatic pistols. Neither is case length, so I probably would have been better off to never write that column in the first place. Shooting has enough myths and conventional wisdom — much of which is booooguus — without folks like me adding to it ... sorry.



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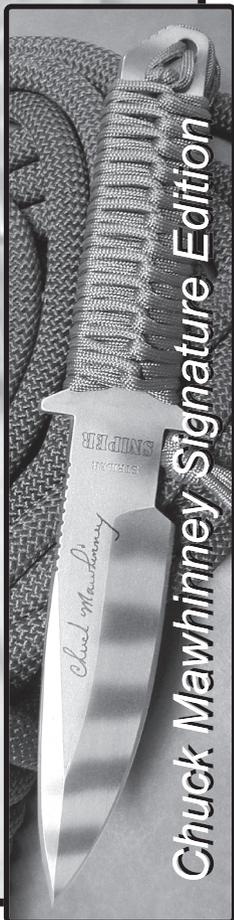
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# The AYOOB FILES

## WRONG WEAPON: THE DER/KIFER INCIDENT

- Situation:** The intruder snarls, "I'm going to kill you." Believing you and your partner are going to be shot, you perform the indicated response. Next thing you know, you're on trial for Murder.
- Lesson:** It's the reasonable perception that counts. Conceal nothing from your attorney, understand the law, and know "the truth will set you free."
- 

June 30, 2001, about 9:30 PM. The big, dilapidated building at 1301 North Wolfe Street in East Baltimore is surrounded by urban blight. Heroin syringes and beer bottles alike litter the filthy alley alongside the building, and even the sidewalk in front. The building is owned by Lum Der, a Chinese immigrant who followed the American Dream and found it with hard work. The top half of the structure houses Lum's wholesale restaurant supply business. The bottom half is occupied by Abacus Refinishing, a partnership that has been run for the last six years by Lum's son Kenny and his partner, Darrell Kifer, both 35.

The place has been haunted by repeated burglaries, sometimes daily. There's been one just today. Someone smashed through a bricked-up second floor window and took a pile of restaurant supplies. Darrell and Kenny had to spend the afternoon repairing the giant hole in the wall. Now, delayed by that and working late, they're finally finishing their project of the day, repairing a huge wooden bar top from a local tavern. Lights are on downstairs. Industrial fans are blowing to clear glue and varnish fumes and also to dissipate the brutal summer heat. It's obvious to anyone outside that the building is occupied.

They both hear a crash from upstairs.

With a sigh, work is set aside. Perhaps something just fell over, but they have to check. Because of the recent burglaries, and because this is a neighborhood where there have been murders, each brings a gun to work. Kenny is one of the relatively few citizens in Baltimore licensed to carry concealed, and he is wearing a Heckler and Koch USP Compact .45 auto, in a nylon holster on his right hip, with a spare magazine in front of the scabbard. Darrell retrieves the Mossberg 500 shotgun he brings to work daily in a case and keeps loaded there, with eight shells in the full-length magazine under its 20" barrel and a ninth in the firing chamber. All nine are Winchester Low Recoil 00 buckshot. Kenny's pistol is also fully loaded with nine rounds, all Cor-Bon 185 grain +P JHP. They don't really think they're going to find an intruder; they never have before. They're just checking for peace of mind. As they go up the narrow staircase that leads to the second floor, Kenny's pistol is still holstered and Darrell's shotgun is casually down at his side.

They reach the top of the stairs where the second floor warehouse spreads out in front of them in disarray. It is dimly lit with only the left bank of lights turned on; the staircase brings them up facing the darkened right side. In front of them, a slender, dark-clad figure rises from a hunkered-down position, its back toward them. They are about 35 feet apart.

*Continued on page 74*

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# WALTHER PPKS



## American Style

**H**istorically, the Walther PP was the first commercially successful double-action semi-automatic pistol. Since its introduction in 1929, the basic Walther design has been produced in Germany, France, the U.S.A. and copied in a number of other places.

We think the *compact* pistol is an American invention and we are wrong. Walther did it in 1931 with the PPK. Then in 1968, to comply with restrictions of the Gun Control Act of 1968, the PP frame was combined with the PPK slide and presto, we have the PPK/S. The letters come from the German: Polizeipistole and Polizeipistole Kriminal. I always thought it was for "kurz" which is German for "short."

**S&W's Version "1" of this distinguished design fixes some previous faults and raises the bar for Walther.**

**Charles E. Petty • Photos: Ichiro Nagata**

A detailed close-up photograph of a handgun's trigger assembly. The trigger is a polished metal piece with a textured grip. The hammer is partially visible, showing its serrated edge. The background is a dark, blurred gradient of red and orange. The text is overlaid in the top right corner.

**“Poliziepistole and  
Poliziepistole  
Kriminal.”**

*S&W's new PPKS on left, wartime-era PP in center and handsome commercial gun with ivory on right.*



Both of the pistols were first chambered for the .32 ACP (7.65 Browning), .380 ACP (9mm Kurz) and .22 Long Rifle. There were also a small number of PPs produced in .25 ACP. In Europe the .32 was widely used by both police and German military. Both .32 ACP and .380 ACP models were made, but in the USA the .380 is king. The *puny* .32 was not suitable for American tastes.

During World War II the Nazi regime was a huge consumer of PP and PPK pistols in both .32 and .380 calibers. There is a nearly endless variety, distinguished largely by markings and a good collection could contain dozens of pistols. Following the war production was moved to Manurhin in France.

There is much to recommend the little guns for defense and they concealed well under Mr. Bond's tuxedo. While the effect was not as spectacular as Dirty Harry's .44, the movies inspired a lot of folks to buy Walthers. In the postwar years, the exclusive importer of Walther pistols was the famed Interarms company, owned by the late Sam Cummings — who built a substantial empire from war surplus weaponry. Passage of the Gun Control Act of 1968 severely restricted importation of small handguns, so a licensing agreement was reached between Walther and Interarms to allow manufacture in the U.S.

*Continued on page 91*

**S&W retained the unusual Walther take-down method.**





# TO SCOPE

---

# OR NOT TO SCOPE

---

Even if your nickname is “Hawkeye,” you still might enjoy a bit of optical enhancement on your shooting iron.

Carolee Boyles



I had been hunting in a drizzle for two days without finding the hog I wanted. The rain had stopped but the sky was gray and heavy. Half an hour after I climbed into my stand, pigs started filtering into the lane in front of me. First a couple of little ones came out of the trees. Then about 100 yards up the lane, a brown pig with black spots

crossed the road kind of casually, but it was beyond what I had set as my range.

A few minutes later — and 25 yards closer — it crossed the road again. By now there were eight pigs in front of me. Some were very young; the ones that were big enough just weren't well filled-out.

Then the brown and black pig eased out of the woods right in front of me. She looked to be about 100 pounds, and was

*A big scope like this Leupold red-dot sight means more light and easy shooting for tired eyes.*



**Carolee liked the way the optics on her S&W 686 helped her to down her hog.**



**Bushnell's HOLOSight is tough enough for a Freedom Arms bruiser!**

plump and round. I got the S&W 686 up, thumbed the hammer back, put the crosshairs behind her ear, and shot. She tipped over without taking a step. Bingo.

### **Why Scope?**

If you're a handgun hunter, using a scope can be advantageous.

"The problem with open sights is you have a very short sight radius," said Chris Lalik, product manager for riflescopes at Bushnell. "Any kind of scope makes a huge difference in terms of shot placement, and ability to shoot at the beginning and end of the day."

For competition shooters, whether or not to scope a competition handgun depends on the kind of shooting you're doing. In IDPA, for instance, you can't use optics. In other competitive venues, it depends on which class you're in.

"Some games have two classes, with optics as the defining issue," said Ken Jorgensen, director of marketing and communications for Smith & Wesson. Competition shooters who use optics often shoot red dot scopes, he says.

"That's where red dots and sights with heads-up displays really come into their own," he said. "You find the dot, put it on the target, pull the trigger and move on. In a lot of competition shooting, reaction time is the name of the game. You have to have good hits fast."

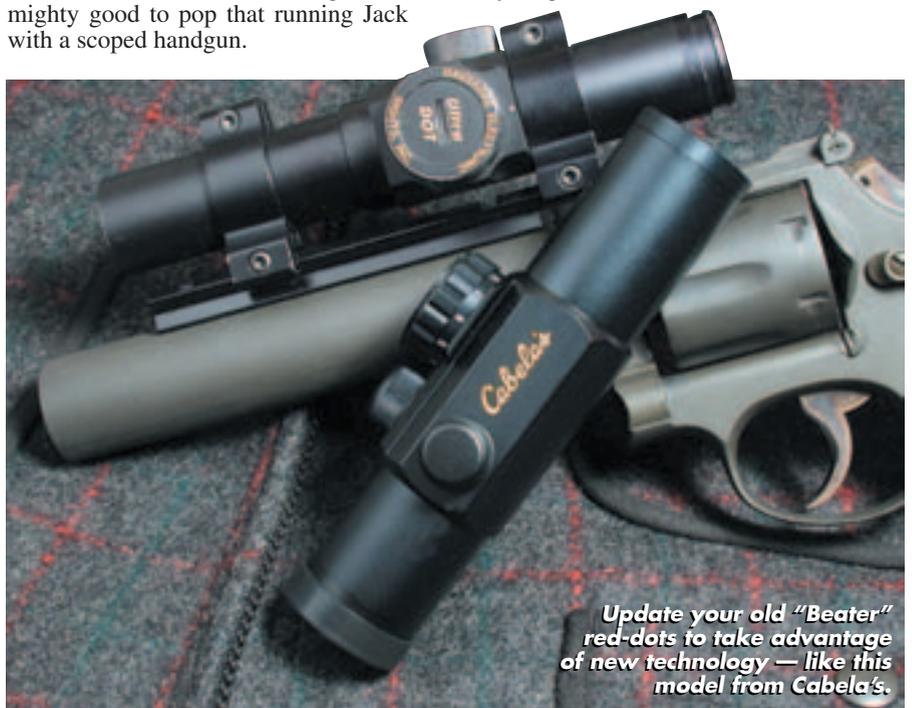
Scopes also help mature shooters continue in the sport longer, he said, because finding iron sights through bifocals and trifocals can be challenging.

Like riflescopes, handgun scopes come in three categories: traditional crosshair scopes, red dots, and holographic sights such as Bushnell's HOLOSight. If you're putting a traditional scope on a handgun,

select one that's for handguns so it has long eye relief. Most rifle scopes only have a couple of inches of eye relief and simply won't work when held at arm's length.

Many handgun shooters use a 2x or 3x fixed-power scope. Even handgun scopes with low power have a small field of view because of the long eye relief; going to a higher magnification reduces the field of view even farther. You've got to be mighty good to pop that running Jack with a scoped handgun.

"One problem most variable handgun scopes have is that as you turn the magnification up, your eye relief shortens," Lalik said. "At about 5-power they start getting close to your head, so you're not shooting with the same shooting position." One variable scope Lalik suggests is Bushnell's Elite 3200 in 2-6x32, which has a constant 20 inches of eye relief at any magnification.



**Update your old "Beater" red-dots to take advantage of new technology — like this model from Cabela's.**



**Even an ace like Micky Fowler gets an assist with optics.**

Another issue with higher power scopes is stability.

“Once you get up to around 6-power and above, unless you have the ability to really stabilize the gun, too much power magnifies every bit of movement; every heartbeat makes the gun jump,” Jorgensen said.

Although there are no hard and fast rules about what kind of scope is suitable for hunting or for target shooting, one general difference between hunting scopes and target scopes is the height of the turrets.

“On tall target turrets, instead of using a coin to turn the elevation, you can turn them with your fingers,” said Toni Knight, Technical Services Manager at Simmons Outdoor Corporation. The difference is simply convenience — target

shooters do a lot more adjusting of their scopes, and the higher turrets are easier to adjust. Simmons has ProHunter handgun scopes in 2x20 and 4x32, both of which have low profile turrets.

### **Electronic Ease**

Then there are red dot scopes. Red dot handgun scopes don’t magnify the target; although it’s possible to add magnification, but again, the field of view becomes more limited. One that Lalik recommends from Bushnell is the Trophy 1x28;

Tasco also has four red dot scopes suitable for handguns in their BKR line.

When you look for a red dot scope, Lalik says, be careful of the dot size.

“If you’re going to shoot at longer distances, you’ll probably want a smaller dot because it’s more precise,” he said. “At closer distances, you’ll want a bigger dot.”

Jorgensen agrees.

“Some red dots have variable-sized dots, and for some people that’s an advantage,” he said. “If you put a big dot on an 8-inch plate at 50 yards, you can’t even see the plate. With a fine dot, you can put it on the top of the plate or wherever you want it.”

One disadvantage to red dots in hunting situations, Jorgensen said, is the lack of light-gathering ability.

“Plus, in low-light situations, it’s kind



**Heavy recoiling handguns need tough scopes and mounts. This system from Leupold uses special “Torx” screws to keep things bolted together.**



of like looking into a light bulb,” he said. “You have to be able to see beyond the red dot to use it.”

Perhaps the ultimate in electronic sights is the Bushnell HOLOSight, which combines a large sight radius with a heads up display that works out to 100 yards or more. One advantage of the HOLOSight is its unlimited eye relief.

Whether you’re hunting with a conventional handgun caliber such as .44 Mag., or a handgun built around a rifle cartridge like a Thompson Contender or Encore, you’re going to be dealing with a lot of recoil. So you need to use a scope designed to take that kind of punishment.

“For instance, the Tasco PDP 2s and PDP 3s are all rated for a .44 Mag.,” Lalik said. “The HOLOSight and the Bushnell Elites are rated at a .454 Casull.” Tough-enough for most hunting situations.

### Mount-Up

Mounting the base and rings on a handgun is basically the same as for a rifle, unless you’re talking about a semi-auto pistol.

“Pistols are more of an issue than revolvers because you have a slide on top,” Jorgensen said. “You usually end up with something that bolts around the frame and maybe the trigger guard, or you drill and tap the frame and have a bracket that comes up and around and clears the slide so it can move.”

Jorgensen said mounts of this kind are most often used on high-end competition pistols, and suggests Briley Manufacturing in Texas as a good place to start looking for them.

For revolvers, you’re talking about either Weaver or Redfield style rings. In many cases, the actual mounting of the scope is pretty simple.

“On a Smith revolver manufactured since the early 1990s, you just pull the existing sights off,” Jorgensen said. “The frame is already drilled and tapped for one of the standard Weaver bases.”

If it’s an older Smith, or another revolver that’s not drilled and tapped, you can have a gunsmith prepare it for mounting optics for around \$50 or so.

One caution: be sure you have the scope mounted properly in terms of recoil. Under the stresses of a lot of shooting a handgun scope may shift,



making you think either the scope or the gun itself has a problem.

“Typically, if you have a problem with your scope, it’s either in the rings or the bases,” Lalik said. “If there’s any weakness in the way a scope is mounted, recoil will expose it.”

Mount the base and rings and make sure everything fits and the rings are perfectly aligned.

“On big handguns, I’ll often lap my rings,” Lalik said. “I take a 1-inch rod with a fine grit in the rings, and actually remove a little bit of the material of the rings. That increases the amount of surface of the rings that contacts the scope. Then things never move around.”

Another tip from Lalik: put non-permanent Blue Loc-Tite on the mounts.

Adding optics to a handgun can improve your efficiency and accuracy, and for those of us who have passed the age of 40, add years of

enjoyment to our shooting.

“The two basic rules of handgun shooting are, ‘Watch the front sight,’ and ‘Squeeze the trigger,’” Jorgensen said. “When you can’t see the front sight, your shooting suffers dramatically. Putting a red dot on a competition gun, or putting a scope on a hunting gun, can give a shooter a new lease on his or her sport.”

Getting old has its advantages — and disadvantages — but the idea of scoping your handgun, whether it be for competition, hunting, or just for the hell of it, is easy, affordable and rates high in the fun category when you’re finished.

Excuse me, but it’s time to go pig hunting again ...



**When long barrels still make it tough to get focused, screw-on a scope or red-dot sight to get things rocking again!**

# SILENT

# FORCE

Sharp Steel from  
Crawford Knives

Pat Covert

Left to right;  
Perfigo, Perseco,  
and Perfigo (closed).

Pat Crawford has been on a mission for over 30 years — to create and build some of the finest tactical knives in the world. Mission accomplished.

Custom knifemaker Pat Crawford of West Memphis, Ark., is a quiet guy. Maybe it's because he was a bean counter before he ventured into the world of custom knifemaking as a diversion to his somewhat formal career. After all, when was the last time you saw your accountant on a boogie board? Mild-mannered

and soft-spoken, Crawford lets his knives do the talking. And talk they do.

Crawford started making knives in the early 1970s. "I remember reading an article in *Gun Digest*," says Crawford, "and it said there were only a few custom knifemakers in the U.S. and they were selling these knives for as much as fifty dollars. I was an accountant at the time

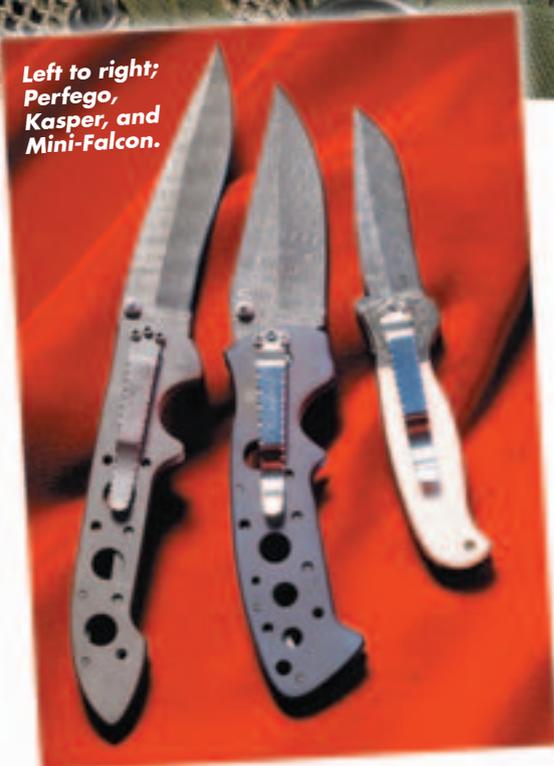


Mini-Falcon

Top to bottom;  
Combat Tanto,  
Kasper Folder,  
Perfego, and  
Legionnaire.



Left to right;  
Perfego,  
Kasper, and  
Mini-Falcon.



not only having more fun making knives than he was keeping books, he was making money, enough to go full time, and he did.

### **Tactical Elite**

By the late 1980s Pat Crawford had established himself as a top custom knifemaker, met the requirements to join the Knifemaker's Guild, and was making a nice living for he and his family in West Memphis. In the meantime, he had developed a following for his fixed blades among tactical and law enforcement users. Little did he know his career was about to get a huge boost.

During the late 1980s a new genre of knife began to appear. The early progenitors of this new confab were guys like Bob Terzuola, Ernest Emerson, Kit Carson — and Pat Crawford. Pat jumped into the tactical folder market headfirst. His previous experience supplying fixed blades to tactical types gave him keen insight into what these users wanted. Some of Crawford's earliest designs, such as the Point Guard, are still in his line

*Continued on page 94*

## **THE CRKT/ CRAWFORD CONNECTION**

If you're a fan of Pat Crawford knives but just don't seem to have the budget for a highfalutin' custom, there's good news — Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT) has been on the Crawford bandwagon for over five years and offers a plethora of the knifemaker's designs at very affordable prices.

CRKT co-owners Paul Gillespie and Rod Bremer recognized Crawford's talents early on. According to Bremer, "Pat's designs caught my eye approximately 10 years ago when he was collaborating with another production knife company. All I heard was how well the pattern sold and, since I am a peddler at heart, this really caught my attention." Gillespie adds, "Their designs are simple, functional and they sell. They have eliminated the "fluff" and make straightforward, intelligent work tools.

*Continued on page 84*

and needed a diversion to forget auditing, so I thought making a few knives would be a fun way to make money."

Inspired by legendary knifemaker Bob Loveless, Crawford started out making fixed blade knives, often tweaking one of the master's designs to give it his own twist. By 1975, Pat was

# TRAVELING

## TUSSEY'S STEALTH COMP

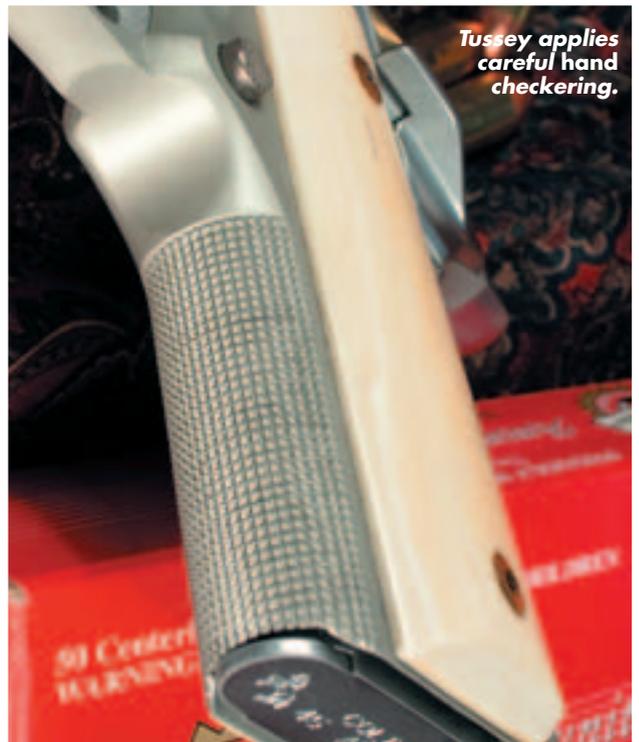


*Looking like it grew there, the tidy comp doesn't detract from the compact Officer's ACP.*

It's mid-night-thirty and dark like the second line of the Bible. I've got the GT Pony car stretched out across the lonesome high desert at a (classified) ground speed. I'm headed home. There's enough gas in the car and enough coffee in me to complete the trip. Further, the wife knows where I am via cell phone, and I know my Tussey Custom Officer's ACP resides in the shoulder holster under the old flight jacket I'm wearing. Like the man said, the 6 P Rule (Prior Planning Prevents Pitifully Poor Performance) always applies. The compact Tussey Custom started life as a standard 45 ACP Colt 80 Series lightweight, stainless steel, Officer's ACP. Terry worked on it over a period of time until it became what you see in the photos. The easiest way to describe the extent of the work is to say it does not have night-sight inserts (mainly because I won't send it away for that long).

Terry did a lot of external work on the gun, and when people see it, they naturally comment on that facet of the pistol first. That, and they ask if the grips are real ivory. Yes, they are.

The other thing that gets them is the stealth comp. I always present the pistol with the slide locked back and the configuration of the barrel/slide comp is something people notice but don't fully appreciate until the slide is closed. As the comp on the barrel moves into lock-up on the slide, people ask, "Is that the same length as a normal Officer's slide — or longer?" It's the same size. The more knowledgeable observers will also notice — while the slide is still locked back — that the barrel is fitted the same as



*Tussey applies careful hand checkering.*

# COMPANION

## IS "JUST RIGHT"

R.E. BROWN



*Is it a spaceship on impulse power or just a view of the Stealth Comp's ramped barrel? You decide.*



a match barrel. I know who these people are because they ask, "Is the barrel fitted?" or "How does it shoot with the fitted barrel?" I answer that it shoots almost as good as my Government Tussey with the match barrel, and much better than the production 1911s I've shot.

This little Tussey gun will shoot 25-yard groups under 2" — middle-aged eyeballs and coffee intake aside. All done handily with 230 gr. Hydra-shocks, 185 gr. Silvertips and 165 gr. Personal Defense loads. It also shoots every time I pull the trigger. And that's a convenient trait.

### **But It Gets Better**

The handling characteristics of the pistol are quite good. The pistol balances well from empty to a full magazine. I've had a few buddies fire the pistol on occasion and they have all commented on the pistol's pointability, ease with which it moves from target to target, and the fine trigger pull. They've also commented on the Stealth Comp.

As anybody who has ever shot a compensated pistol knows, you always get more noise, and in some cases, more muzzle flash. The Tussey certainly has more noise, and the comp works just fine, so you don't want to fire the pistol with any part of your body over the ports. But I can't say it has more flash. That may be a result of the slower velocities of the 45 ACP and not the hot-rod .38 Super rounds usually associated with compensated pistols. You race-gun types may insert your answer here.

The stealth comp does alleviate a certain amount of recoil in the light pistol. While this is much-appreciated, the greatest assistance from the comp is its ability to keep the barrel down, and close to the target. This allows for a very fast second shot for such a small pistol. And fast can be a good thing, you know. Sometimes.

I know Terry could build a smaller, lighter pistol — he does that all the time. He could build a tighter shooting pistol — I've already got a few. I could have a 1911 with a larger comp — I really don't need one. So, I guess what I'm saying is I like this one just the way it is. 

*Go to Tussey's website to learn how to meet him! Tussey Custom; (775) 246-1533; website: [www.tusseycustom.com](http://www.tusseycustom.com)*



*It's virtually impossible for a recoil spring to "kink."*

# FULL LENGTH GUIDE RODS —

## MYTH OR MAGIC?

Charles E. Petty



**I**t brought joy to my heart to see Alex Hamilton's pistolsmithing column not long ago read, "Full-length guide rods float inside the frame of your semiautomatic — just sit there taking up space — and can cause malfunctions..." My only complaint is he didn't condemn them roundly enough.

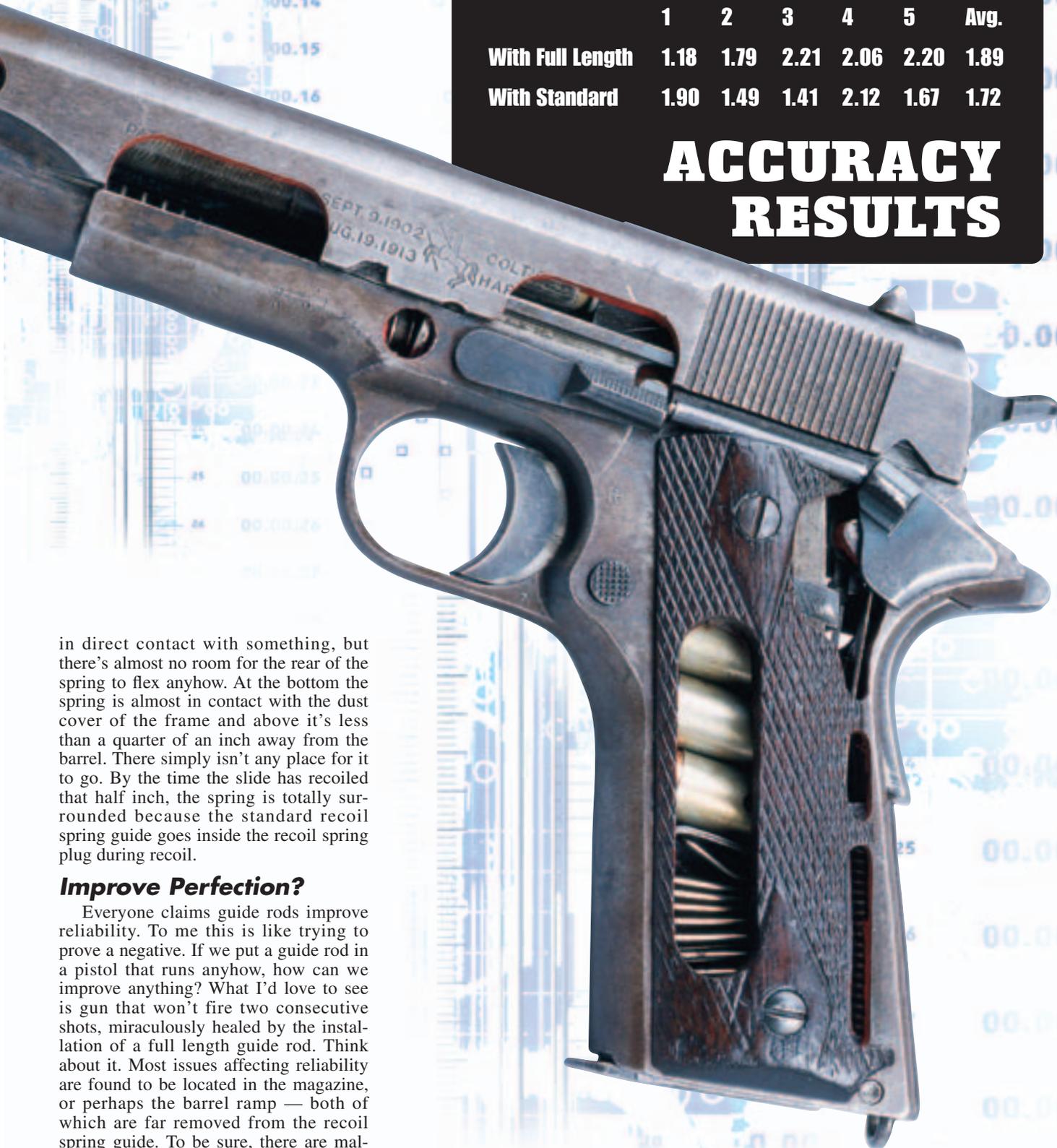
Full length guide rods came about in the early days of practical shooting when we were hanging heavy things on the barrel to moderate felt recoil. In those circumstances, the rod performed a useful function by supporting the heavy compensators while the slide cycled. Compensators are on the wane, but the bloody

guide rods remain. Over the last few years it's been rare for a Government Model type pistol to come through my door without a full length guide rod. A drawer in my workbench has more than a few because, if the gun was going to stay here, the rod had to go.

I'm not alone. Pistolsmith Wayne Novak said guide rods do two things and both of them are bad: they make the gun hard — sometimes virtually impossible — to take apart, and increase the cost needlessly. We are told guide rods improve accuracy and increase reliability and, like other urban legends, some of that sounds reasonable. I've never seen how they could help with accuracy —

and still don't — but it seems reasonable to think something that would prevent the spring from kinking would help. It would, but the spring, as Mr. Browning made it, already is nicely guided and would have a hard time kinking even if it wanted to. While loose springs do not want to compress in a straight line, it really takes a lot of deflection to actually put a crimp on one.

The standard arrangement prevents the spring from bending in three places. First, is the standard recoil spring guide and, at the other end, there's a 1.7" length contained within the spring tunnel of the slide and the recoil spring plug. That only leaves less than half an inch of spring not



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|-------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
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## ACCURACY RESULTS

in direct contact with something, but there's almost no room for the rear of the spring to flex anyhow. At the bottom the spring is almost in contact with the dust cover of the frame and above it's less than a quarter of an inch away from the barrel. There simply isn't any place for it to go. By the time the slide has recoiled that half inch, the spring is totally surrounded because the standard recoil spring guide goes inside the recoil spring plug during recoil.

### Improve Perfection?

Everyone claims guide rods improve reliability. To me this is like trying to prove a negative. If we put a guide rod in a pistol that runs anyhow, how can we improve anything? What I'd love to see is gun that won't fire two consecutive shots, miraculously healed by the installation of a full length guide rod. Think about it. Most issues affecting reliability are found to be located in the magazine, or perhaps the barrel ramp — both of which are far removed from the recoil spring guide. To be sure, there are malfunctions traceable to the recoil spring. The most common of those is the stove-pipe, which could be caused by a too-strong spring, or by a shooter-error called limp-wristing.

At first we heard claims guide rods would improve accuracy, but I have yet to figure out how it could. The guide rod doesn't touch any of the gun's parts that are critical to accuracy. There are basically five areas that govern the accuracy

of the pistol. They are: the fit of the bottom barrel lugs with the slide stop pin, the fit of the bushing to barrel and slide, the fit of the slide to the frame, the fit of the barrel headspace extension (hood) within the slide and finally the lockup between the top of the barrel and the lugs within the slide. Having said this, I'll note current catalogs do not contain any claims for accuracy.

Even so, accuracy is something we can objectively measure. Several years ago I was preparing to test a new Springfield Armory Trophy Match in the Ransom Rest when the thought came it would be easy enough to find out. After all, I could shoot groups with the factory full length rod and then, without taking the pistol out of the rest, change

*Continued on page 85*

# THE BEST GUN I NEVER OWNED

Michael Bane  
Photos: Ichiro Nagata

A 1911 Article ... With a Twist:  
Carter's Masterful Work.

**"Yesterday's wine  
Yesterday's wine  
Aging with time  
Like yesterday's wine..."  
-Willie Nelson**

**M**iracles, as Willie Nelson has observed, occur in the strangest of places. But before we can talk about the miracle, we've got to talk about the gun. Ah, the gun, every bit as technically up-to-date as a Harley Shovelhead, with the sleek lines of a bullet-hole Buick Roadmaster after three coats of hand-rubbed wax and a final polish that only comes from pure love. That gun.

And before we talk about the gun, we've got to talk about the old days of the Great Crusade, when we had all our hair and the devout certainty that practical pistol shooting was going to change The World As We Knew It, and we were the chosen apostles.

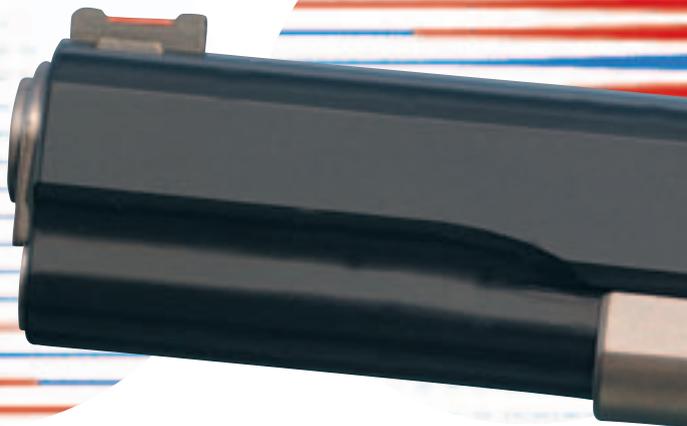
Not many people could run with Robbie Leatham and Brian Enos. One of the very few was a quiet long-haired guy from Arkansas, Ross Carter, who'd stumbled into practical shooting after reading one of the first *American*

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2003





**“I figured if I bought the gun one piece at a time, sort of like Johnny Cash’s car song, I could probably afford it without a bank loan.”**



*Handgunner* articles on Bill Wilson.

“I decided to drive up to Berryville and meet Bill,” says Ross, now 51 years old. “He talked me into shooting.”

Throughout the 80s, Ross Carter was one of the most consistent of the top shooters, scoring in the top ten in the USPSA Nationals (4th in the 1984 Worlds), the Steel Challenge, Bianchi, the legendary Second Chance Bowling Pin shoots, the Soldier of Fortune three-gun matches ... you name it, Ross excelled in it. He instructed at John Shaw’s Mid-South Institute in Mississippi (I was one of his pupils — there’s a challenge) and at Ray Chapman’s

Chapman Academy in Missouri.

But then, he was already building his own guns — “I started with the first gun I ever bought!” — and his reputation was growing. His specialty was meticulous craftsmanship, specializing in the 5” 1911, “which I think is just about the best gun for everything.”

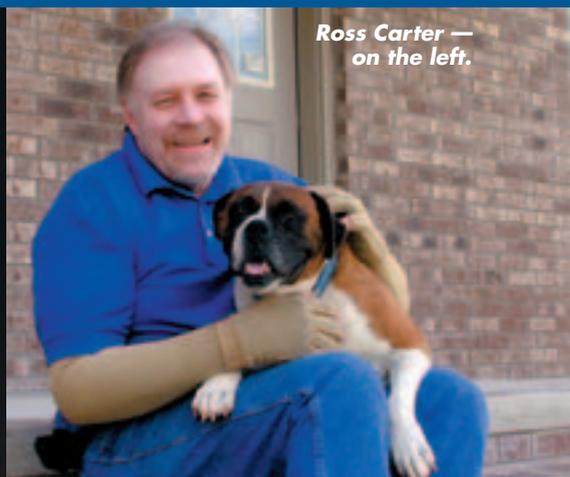
### **The Whoops Factor**

I hadn’t really thought much about Ross-the-Gunsmith until a Single Stack Classic a few years back. I’d decided to shoot the match at the last minute, whipped open my gun safe and hauled out my ancient stainless Gold Cup, about

as single stack as you can get. Years ago I’d made the classic Gold Cup mod, replacing the weak roll pin holding on the adjustable sight with a drill rod, which I’d cleverly broken off in place. I was doing pretty good in the match until a stage with a charging mover, where I noticed I didn’t seem to leave any holes in the targets. Hmmmmmm. A brief examination of the gun — me being an expert and all — revealed a missing drill rod and a flopping rear sight.

On the way back to my car with my now emasculated Gold Cup, I saw Ross, who held his hand out.

“Give me the gun, Michael,” my friend



Ross Carter —  
on the left.

said, “before you screw it up again.”

Suffice to say when the old Gold Cup came home, it was the gun it had always meant to be. About that time Ross and I started *The Conversation* about one good 1911.

No, scratch that. One perfect 1911.

After a couple of three decades in this, I’m lucky enough to have guns marked Wilson, Heinie, Novak, Cylinder & Slide, LaRocca, a veritable who’s-who of the great 1911 mechanics. I’d been thinking of having my old compensated Wilson .45 rebuilt for IDPA competition, and bounced the idea off Ross.

“Michael, don’t compromise on this one.” he said, all Arkansas common sense, “For once, why don’t you figure out exactly what you want, the best of the best, and I’ll build that for you.”

Not just a really good gun — I have



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**CARTER CUSTOM  
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1911**



really good guns — but an heirloom, a perfect 1911. Homage to the old days before polymer, red-dot sights and attractive young women who call me “Mister” and mention I’m the same age as their daddies.

So I began laying down what I thought of as the ground rules. Because this was my vision of a perfect 1911, I decided on a 6” longslide version. Mainly because I’d never had one, although I’ve always meant to get once since I saw the first welded-together longslide from Jim Clark Senior back in the dawn of time. For practical competition, the longslides were quickly supplanted first by muzzle weights and then the ubiquitous compensators. But there is something classic,

timeless about the lines of the longslide, a balance, a sense this was what a competition pistol was meant to be.

And I did want a competition pistol, because I came from IPSC competition. Heck, I might even shoot the thing in a match, if they had retro matches.

Of course, it had to be a .45.

### **The List**

So I started a list — what would be the best combination of parts for a 1911 longslide? I figured if I bought the gun one piece at a time, sort of like Johnny Cash’s car song, I could probably afford it without a bank loan.

Frame and slide first, and the list was

long — Baer, Wilson, Caspian, Rock River, Kimber, Colt. In the end, Ross and I decided on Caspian. Caspian had been among the early supporters of practical pistol, and the numerous guns I’ve had based on their products were always first-rate. Ross suggested a plain un-checked blue-steel frame and slide — he’d handle all the checkering duties. For sights, I decided on the rugged Caspian adjustable rear and a dovetail Dawson Precision fiber optic front sight, my nod to modernity. Besides, it’s just a super front sight.

Next came the barrel. I waxed enthusiastic to Ross about several brands, and there was a long silence over the telephone. Eventually, I wound down.

“Wilson,” Ross said. “Or Bar-Sto.”

Check. Wilson.

Hammer and sear, we were in perfect agreement: Cylinder & Slide’s incredible Ultra-Light 3.5 pound trigger pull kit, with Ultra-Light hammer, sear, disconnect, sear spring and main-spring. Hard to believe just how good this set-up is. I insisted we mate it with an STI International trigger — the glass-filled nylon shoe with a titanium bow — the best 1911 trigger I’ve ever worked with. It’s the set-up I use on my daily carry gun, a Burns Custom Pistol STI LS-9 9mm.

Mag well? The single piece unit from Smith & Alexander. Beavertail, ambisafeties, tactical mag catch, firing pin, ejector, extractor, slide release and miscellaneous parts all from Wilson Combat.

Still, it ain’t nothing but a box of parts. I could put the parts together, and it’d probably go bang. It’d still be just junk in a box. Art is what makes a great gun, or a

*Continued on page 98*



# SAVAGE STRIKER



**THIS .300 WSM POWERHOUSE  
CAN REALLY CHANGE YOUR CHANNEL!**

**CHARLES E. PETTY**



**I**'m sure you all have a private list of, "the world's greatest lies." You know, like, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help." Most of the others can't be printed here, but one on my list is, "It doesn't kick much." Anytime somebody says this you can almost bet on getting your fillings kicked out of you.

So when Brian Herrick of Savage said this to me about the chambering of their Striker hunting handgun in .300 Winchester Short Magnum, my response was, "Yeah sure." I'd just been to the dentist and didn't want my valuable fillings clinking onto the pavement.

Except — he was right. Oh you definitely know something big happened, but it's neither brutal nor excessive — which wasn't at all what I expected. I don't know that I'm any more or less recoil

*"Ooof..." There's a reason Charley is making that funny face.*



from the side as someone shoots the Striker, the muzzle flash and blast is truly spectacular. Sort of in the "fire and brimstone" league. But when you're behind the gun it's almost like being in front of a heat gun. If the wind is in your face, a blast of hot air hits you and is instantly gone. A very quick blow dryer.

I've never experienced anything quite like this before. Shooting glasses are an always-thing, but especially important here. But having said all this, the sensation really isn't unpleasant, just tangible evidence of the powerful event that just took place. Lots of fun.

### ***It Gets Better***

The stock is a composite material, colored with a leaf camouflage pattern. The forend is flat on the bottom to sit well on a rest but is also rounded to the side for a good hand-grip. The butt is flat — again to sit well on a rest. One thing missing is any provision for sling swivels and if, as

*Continued on page 115*

sensitive than the next guy, but I've got a very good memory and shooting guns that hurt almost always leave an impression. Intuitively, I was pretty sure getting stomped was in the picture so, with the intent of minimizing pain, I began with some very modest handloads.

Bullet weights increasing from 110 to 180 grains in normal increments seemed like a sensible idea. Even so, I was not looking forward to that first shot and was truly disappointed. It was basically a non-event. So was the next, and the next and so-on. After four or five wimp rounds I chambered a factory 150 gr. that was much more eventful and finally a 180 that was a real crowd-pleaser. But none of them really hurt, in spite of the applause from the lanes next to me and the offers to call the fire department.

### ***A Handy Hand-Rifle***

Instead of the wrist-wrenching torque we get with big magnum or super magnum revolvers, this one has more of a straight back push that you feel in the shoulder. Much credit goes to Savage's adjustable muzzle brake, which had proven to be very effective on a couple of rifles I've used. Weight helps too. Complete with a Leupold 2.5x8 handgun scope, the whole thing weighs 6.8 lbs.

The design of the stock is hand-filling, but the grip may be a bit big for someone with small hands.

Many of the so-called hand rifles are just that — a conventional bolt action stuck in a handgun-style stock. A standard right-handed action makes a great handgun for a southpaw. Savage didn't do that. The action is left-handed with a right side loading port that makes it a true right-handed handgun. Other than that the action is standard Savage.

When the gun came I ordered a Leupold base for the Savage action but when I tried to mount the scope it wouldn't work. The spacing of the rings was a tiny bit too wide for the small scope. A call to Savage produced the recommendation to use B-Square Interlock rings, which fit a Weaver-style base. It worked like a champ and the rings have a key that fits into the slots on the base to ensure nothing is likely to move under recoil.

When you watch



The American Pistolsmiths Guild is pleased to announce their Custom Gun of the Year. This annual exercise in the gunmaker's art consistently raises the bar in the kind of quality and innovation available only from a custom shop.

Beginning with a stock Ruger Blackhawk in .44 Magnum, the artisans of the Pistolsmiths Guild then worked their collective magic.

Larry Crow of Competitive Edge Gunworks; (660) 731-5124; made and installed the flawless 7½" octagonal barrel with a Weigand interchangeable blade front sight. Larry is one of the nation's leading cowboy action specialists and a champion shooter.

Ron Power of Power Custom; (573) 372-5799; fitted an oversized base pin, removed all cylinder end-float and installed a Power Custom Bisley hammer, trigger set and reverse spin pawl. Ron is easily one of the finest revolversmiths in the business.

Alex Hamilton of Ten-Ring Precision; (210) 494-3063; massaged the action into silky-smoothness during an attentive action and trigger job.

Ken Kelly of Mag-Na-Port International; (810) 469-6727; used his deft touch to jewel the hammer and trigger and finished-up with their famous porting on that handsome barrel.

Roy Fishpaw; (434) 993-3470; probably the finest grip maker in the nation, made and carefully fitted the magnificent set of Bighorn Ram horn grips that add color and a definite uniqueness to this fine handgun.

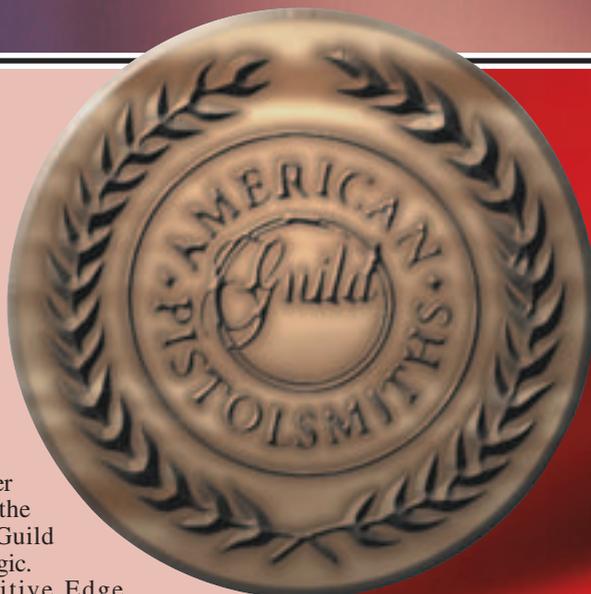
Jere Davison; (540) 587-7695; engraved this one-off special edition Blackhawk with 75-percent Nimschke style coverage. Just enough to please the eye and make you beg for more!

This American Pistolsmiths Guild 2003 Custom Gun of the Year continues the tradition of offering, simply put, the best craftsmanship possible. Each maker deftly applied the techniques they are so gifted with, making the sum of the parts almost too much for the faint of heart! Once again, the bar has been raised in the custom gunsmithing art. For more information or to purchase a raffle ticket to win this fine revolver, contact:

**Jim Stroh**  
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Comer, GA 30629  
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**Cost:** \$20 per ticket (limited to 950 tickets)  
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**Drawing will be Sept. 27, 2003**





# Gun of the Year

# LIGHT

# 6'EM

# UP



*"Hell's afire" is right when you blast 'em with a black-powder .45 Colt load at muzzle-contact distance. Who needs a match?*

## BLACKPOWDER FIRE AND BRIMSTONE FROM A 2" TAURUS!



*Finally a use for those damn holes! The Taurus built-in carbon sight-blackening device.*

**CLINT SMITH**

**I**t's common to see the contemporary gun press review old guns and reproductions of old guns. Taking it a step further, they then develop data and endless lists of smokeless loads for firearms originally intended to be shot with black powder only. But in this mix of modern smokeless powders and old guns — we lose something.

So, let's reverse it all for a moment and see what happens.

### **Cranky Old Guys**

If we take one of those new-age instructors who often declare, with no small amount of sneer evident, that "Clint's a nice guy, but old fashioned" — and then add a dose of cranky (old guys are always cranky, or so we are told) then factor-in a modern gun loaded with some of that old black powder ammo, what happens? What happens is very interesting.

Take one old (but nice?) guy with a new Taurus model 450 2"-barreled .45 Colt revolver, add 32 grains of old FFg black

*When was the last time you had to stomp your targets to put out the fire? Now that's a revolver!*



powder and what do we come up with?

What you come up with is a flame-throwing, fire-starting, butt-thumping blaster with — believe it or not — no hand or teeth jarring recoil. This combination is more than accurate enough used in the double action mode to solve any problems at acceptable self-defense ranges. And, it provides several self-defense assets.

### **Some Assets**

First off, there's — literally — fire between you and the bad guy. Basically, this combo brings fire-starting capabilities toward anyone dim-witted enough to close the ground with you. Almost as an aside, a large caliber hole is also generated in your opponent. In the case of the Taurus, which is provided with the trendy, but questionable recoil reduction holes in the barrel, I believe I have finally found a purpose for said holes. With black powder, all that black goop and efus blasts out of the vent holes and re-blacks the front sight with every compression of the trigger. Yup, it's sort of a built-in front sight carbon-black lamp. Oh yeah, they put out a really loud thump when you touch one off too, not some wimpy bangy-bangy sound like smokeless does. And last, but not least, there's a built-in smoke screen to hide or move behind.

For the record, all the arguments about black powder fouling the revolver action and such nonsense ended-up a very moot

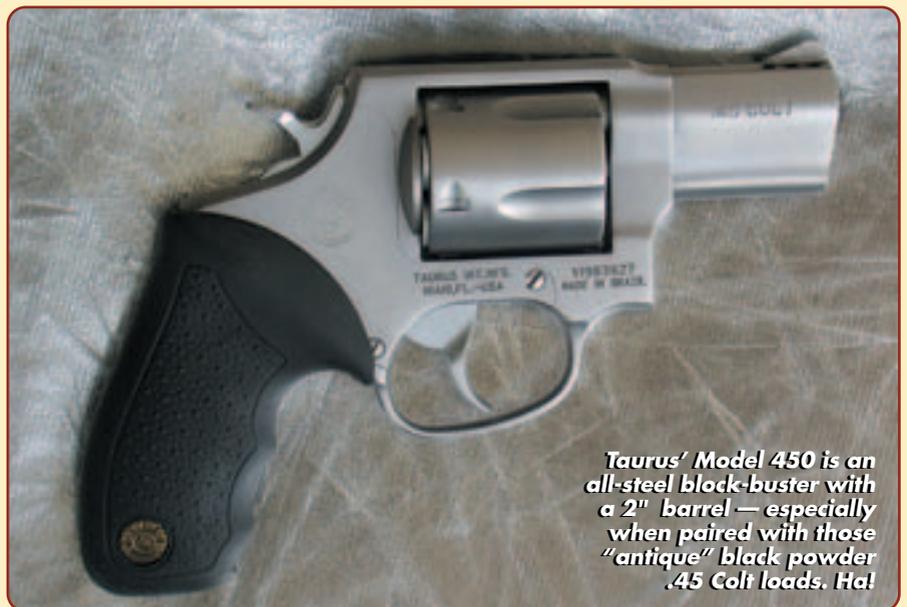
point. We fired 50 rounds of black powder, as well as 50 rounds of smokeless, all in one sitting. Literally, one shot after another. There wasn't a hint of sluggishness or interruption in the operation of the Taurus, in spite of all the horror stories. I can't imagine why that's the case, because the revolver is built tightly, but there you go.

Is this concept for everybody? Is it a good idea? Should you do it?

Yup, as they say, "Just do it." You do have to clean your revolver, but I clean

mine anyway whether I use smokeless or black powder so who cares, and it's not that much more trouble, especially on a stainless gun.

Being an old guy, I don't know much about shooting or fighting, but I'd be inclined to think I wouldn't want to get lit-up by an old guy using a new Taurus revolver loaded with a big bore flame-throwing, smoke-spewing, thumping, .45 Colt. Even if it was a one hundred and thirty year old cartridge. 



*Taurus' Model 450 is an all-steel block-buster with a 2" barrel — especially when paired with those "antique" black powder .45 Colt loads. Ha!*

# WIN THIS COLT SERIES 70 GOV'T MODEL

From Pistol  
Dynamics

**W**ith the reintroduction of the Colt Series 70 pistol, shooters once again have an opportunity to create a custom, no-nonsense 1911 on a genuine Colt chassis — reminiscent of the traditional combat handguns of yesteryear!

This pistol, crafted by pistolsmith-extraordinaire Paul Leibenberg of Pistol Dynamics, is as close to a perfect fighting pistol as one can get. Workmanship is peerless and the fit and finish able to stand any magnifying glass assault. Pistol Dynamics offers what they call “Absolute Customs” — individually crafted handguns designed and built to the true definition of the term. Paul’s 30+ years of innovation and design excellence makes a statement, and that statement is clearly obvious at Pistol Dynamics.

This pistol is their “Enhanced” package for unmodified 1911A1 pistols. The inclusion of Pistol Dynamics’ Interchangeable Sight System (ISS) front sight helps to make this custom Colt even more appealing. This package includes what many consider to be the “must-have” features for a fighting handgun:

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- PD stainless steel standard length guide rod
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- Tactical ignition system with Commander-style hammer
- PD custom machined beavertail
- PD tactical low mount rear sight
- Extended thumb safety
- Beveled magwell
- Bead blast and blue finish with brushed slide flats
- Tactical serrations on front strap
- Aluminum trigger with over-travel stop
- Custom Nill grips made exclusively for Pistol Dynamics

Benchmade’s Model 520 AXIS lock is a compelling companion piece. The aluminum “bi-directional” scales guarantee a secure grip, and the ambidextrous AXIS lock and reversible pocket clip make it exceptionally user-friendly. Benchmade quality, with the distinctive *Handgunner* logo!

***Based upon the current pricing for new Colts, the value of this exciting pistol package is almost \$2,000!***

# 45ACP



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## HOM SEPT./OCT. 2003:

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# CUSTOM 1911

## AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 42

Kenny shouts, "Hey!"

The figure faces them, and the intruder says, "I'm gonna kill you motherf\*\*\*ers!"

They see he is holding something, a dark object, down by his left side in his left hand. Now, he brings it up toward them. There is only one thing to do, and both men do it simultaneously.

Kenny Der draws his pistol, going to the two-handed stance he has always practiced at the shooting range, though he has never fired this particular handgun since he purchased it. This USP is a Variant One, traditional double action, carried hammer down and off safe. Kenny cracks off the first shot double action then fires another as he realizes that he is exposed to the gunman, and begins to drop to kneeling to reduce his target profile. Beside him, Darrell hastily triggers a single un-aimed shotgun blast and runs sideways to his left to get out of the intruder's line of fire.

This puts Darrell, with the 12-gauge, to the antagonist's right and about 25 feet from him. A southpaw, Darrell raises the gun to his left shoulder and pulls the trigger. Nothing. He has forgotten to pump. He racks the action and bam-bam-bam, fires three shots as fast as he can work the slide and trigger. He sees the figure spin and fall, and stops pumping and shooting. Meanwhile, Kenny has kept up a drumbeat of fire with his pistol and gone to slide-lock. He, too, sees the man go down.

Darrell feels a desperate urge to be out of there and sprints back toward the stairs, bumping Kenny as he goes. Kenny reloads, tucking the empty magazine reflexively back in its pouch, and cautiously moves forward keeping his HK trained on the downed figure. He gets a couple of yards away and sees that the man is motionless, looking like a pile of bloody rags, face down. The fallen assailant's left hand is behind him, palm up in what reminds him of a swimmer's stroke. And, near that hand is his weapon.

Oh, God. It's not a gun after all. It's a black steel hammer, just like the ones they use in the shop.

Kenny Der turns and follows Darrell Kifer. He gets on the cell phone and immediately dials 911.

### The Investigation

Paramedics arrive first. Elements of Baltimore PD's famous homicide unit arrive some 25 minutes after the shooting. By now, of course, all lights have been turned on so rescue personnel can work on the wounded man and so the first responding patrol officers can clear the building of any other burglary suspects, none of which are found. Tygon Walker, age 37, is pronounced dead of multiple gunshot wounds at the scene. The businessmen tell the cops what happened.

**Emperor**

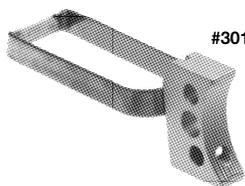
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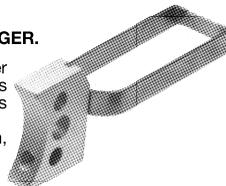
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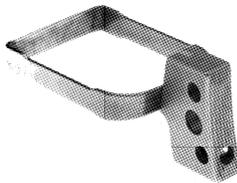
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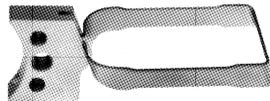
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- Unlike our competitor's products, they also work with a standard flash hole and DO NOT need to be crimped into the case.
- Temperature range is not to exceed -120 degrees F or +175 degrees F. These primers meet or exceed SAAMI specifications for *Lead based* primers!
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Their guns are taken as evidence. Der has fired all nine rounds that were initially in his pistol and did not fire after reloading. When Kifer's shotgun is unloaded, five live rounds are remaining in the magazine and the last spent shell fired is recovered from the chamber. Three spent 12-gauge hulls and nine spent .45 ACP casings are recovered from positions consistent with where the men tell the detectives they were when they fired. No arrests are made.

Both armed citizens go home shaken. Der finds himself sitting up late, with his other pistol at hand, a Para-Ordinance P13 .45. Felons in East Baltimore tend to run in packs and he is desperately afraid of gang retaliation for the shooting. Kifer is likewise distraught; paramedics have had to administer oxygen to him at the death scene.

A police record check shows Tygon Walker to be a career criminal with numerous convictions for burglary and assault. Autopsy shows that six of the nine .45 slugs have struck him, five remaining in the body and that there are numerous buckshot holes of entry and exit in the corpse, with 13 of the .33 caliber lead balls lodged in the cadaver. Many of the wound tracks, and all of the potentially lethal ones, have entered from behind the lateral midline. Extensive needle tracks are also present on both arms.

A toxicology screen shows that at time of death, Walker had 510 micrograms per liter of free morphine in his bloodstream, and 0.21% blood alcohol content. This means that he was more than 2.5 times legally drunk (a standard of 0.08%), and the pathologist who did the autopsy will later tell the Grand Jury how massive the amount of heroin he had on board. Heroin addicts found dead from overdose, he will testify, are often found with only one or two hundred micrograms per liter in their blood.

Five days after the shooting, both men report to the police department to be interviewed in detail, accompanied by legal counsel. Darrell Kifer's interview goes uneventfully. At one point in Der's interrogation, he is asked whether he went up to the body and replies in the negative. After the interview he discusses this with his lawyer, David B. Irwin, and tells him about going up a couple of steps away from the corpse and seeing the hammer. Irwin has him immediately sit down with the lead investigator and explain that. Questioning turns intensively to whether or not he planted the hammer in the suspect's dead hand.

Five months later, the Baltimore City Grand Jury will return a true bill of indictment charging both Der and Kifer with Murder in the First Degree.

### The Trial

The attorneys arrayed against one another in State of Maryland v. Kenny Der and Darrell Kifer were all famous for their courtroom skill, representing a virtual duel

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of the titans. Mark Cohen, chief prosecutor under district attorney Patricia Jes-samy, argued the case personally. Widely considered the best prosecutor in an office of some 200 experienced criminal trial attorneys and one of the best in the country, Cohen had recently prosecuted a young Baltimore man for shooting a priest he claimed had sexually assaulted him. The priest “took the Fifth” on the witness stand and the jury acquitted the man who shot him.

Der was represented by Dave Irwin and Joe Murtha, who became nationally famous for their skillful representation of Linda Tripp during the Monica Lewinsky affair. Kifer’s lawyer was Leslie Stein, a well-known local criminal defense specialist.

**“If the men had turned and ran toward the stairs, they would have been helpless and could have easily been shot in the back.”**

Trier of the facts was Judge John Glynn. Both sides had agreed to a bench trial, in which there would be no jury and the judge would determine the facts as well as the applicable law. Trial began on Friday, January 17, 2003, in Baltimore Circuit Court, just before the MLK Day holiday weekend. In his opening statement, prosecutor Cohen said it was Murder One because the two defendants had lain in wait to ambush and kill, and because they shot Walker multiple times and in the back. Because they had not retreated as Maryland law required them to do, and because the pistol had been loaded with hollow point bullets. He also implied that the defendants had planted the hammer in Tygon Walker’s dead hand. Testimony began with the lead detective, Bob Cherry, describing the scene as he arrived, starting the audiotape of the defendants’ interviews.

On Day Two, the judge allowed the defense’s only expert witness, me, to testify out of sequence because dates had conflicted with another murder trial on the opposite coast. I explained and demonstrated with still photos and video how even in brighter light than what the defendants had to work with, at the distance of 35 feet, the black steel hammer (16" long, weighing just under 3 pounds) was, when held by its head, almost indistinguishable from a long barreled, blue steel revolver. I used as exemplars an 8 3/8" barrel S&W .44 Magnum (12" overall, just over 3

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pounds) and a 10" Dan Wesson .357 (14" long, just over 3 pounds). The judge was shown how a right-handed man might pick up such a hammer with his left hand to feed it to his right hand in a striking posture, exactly mimicking a "man with a gun" appearance.

In states such as Maryland that have a retreat requirement in their self-defense law, retreat is only demanded when it can be done so with complete safety to oneself and others. I explained if the men had turned and ran toward the stairs, they would have been helpless and could have easily been shot in the back, supporting this contention with videotape of firing the .44 with live ammo at 35', recorded by a PACT timer. Two men could not have gotten down the stairs in time, and then found the keys to open the double dead-bolt lock that led into the street where the prosecution said they should have fled. They would likely have been murdered while attempting to do so.

Using a videotape on this issue I had done previously for the American Bar Association and the American Law Institute (1), it was demonstrated the human body can turn 180 degrees in only a fraction of a second. This was supplemented by a video we had done the previous August at the Continental range in Maryland, with the defendants using exemplar weapons. Der had acted out his nine-shot firing sequence a couple of times, each at about 3.5 seconds. Kifer had been able to fire a three-shot sequence from a 12-gauge Mossberg pump in 0.94 of one second. This was absolutely consistent with the time it takes a human body to spin away from danger to it, and with the buckshot pattern entry wounds found on Tygon Walker. I had timed, at the death scene, how long it took Kifer to sprint from his first firing position to his second. In total, from first round to last, the thirteen shots had probably been fired in no more than five seconds.

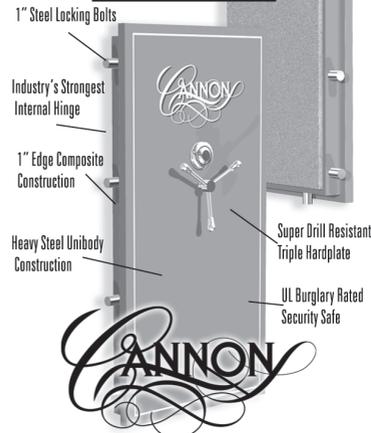
### An Ability Factor

I was also able to explain why the state's pathologist had listed as two shotgun blasts fired into the body was actually only one. The wound pattern on Walker's left arm was identical to the buckshot pattern in his left lower back. Six of the nine pellets in a single blast had torn into the forearm and five had gone through, re-entering the torso amidst the three pellets that had missed the arm.

Finally, it was explained that under contemporary training standards, the hand movement of Walker and the black object in his hand, which both defendants described to police, created an "Ability factor," the reasonable and prudent belief that Walker possessed the power to kill. Being within easy range of the long barreled black revolver the hammer so closely resembled, "Opportunity factor" was fulfilled: their antagonist could be reasonably believed to be capable of killing them both

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immediately. Finally, the statement "I'm gonna kill you MFs" clearly created "Jeopardy factor," the reasonable and prudent belief the opponent's intent was to kill or cripple them. Ability, Opportunity and Jeopardy came together to create a situation of immediate, otherwise unavoidable danger of death or grave bodily harm to them which, under the Maryland law, absolutely justified their use of lethal force against Tygon Walker.

The prosecution picked up the ball again in the waning hours of day two and all of day three. Lead investigator Bob Cherry returned to the stand. On cross-examination — respectful from Irwin, brutal from Stein, like "good cop/bad cop" — Detective Cherry proved to be an honest man as well as a skillful investigator. He allowed he had never seen a homicide case like this one where the shooters were so forthcoming with information, and still charged with murder. The only new evidence beyond the statements of Kifer and Der that had developed in the five months between interrogation and Grand Jury, Cherry testified, was a statement from the dead man's mother that he was right handed. Of course, the two defendants could not have known that, and there were any number of reasons why Tygon Walker might have picked up the hammer with his non-dominant hand. Needle tracks on both arms indicated that he was ambidextrous enough to inject a heroin syringe with either hand. The state's final witness, a medical examiner who had not done the actual autopsy, admitted the angle of wounds was consistent with a rapidly turning man and with the defendants' accounts of the events. The prosecution closed.

Der and Kifer took the stand on day four, confirming what they had told detectives back when the shooting happened. Der explained that he hadn't mentioned approaching the body at first for fear of being falsely accused of planting the hammer, which he believed had been stolen by the deceased in a previous burglary. (Asphalt embedded on that hammer showed it had been used to pound the outside wall: it had entered the scene from the outside in, almost certainly carried there by the burglar himself.)

Both sides offered impassioned closing arguments, having called only three people apiece to testify before closing their cases. Judge Glynn did not need to waste time with further deliberation. At 3:45 PM on Thursday, January 23, day four of the trial, the judge ruled both defendants Not Guilty on all counts. An ordeal that had lasted for 18 months was over at last.

### Lessons

Tell everything to your attorney before you and he sit down with the investigators to go over the details. If Der had done so, there would not have been the perception that "he lied to us about approaching the body, so he or his partner must have

**"One hell of a deal!"**

Roy Huntington, *American Handgunner Magazine*



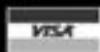
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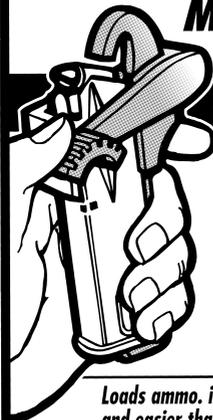


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planted the hammer as a throw-down." This had a great deal to do with the decision to bring the case forward.

Many of the defendants' supporters believe the race card was at work here. Within a close time frame to this shooting, an African-American businessman in Baltimore shot and killed an African-American burglar under very similar circumstances, and the DA's office ruled the homicide justifiable. Der, American-born and of Chinese descent, and Kifer, a Caucasian, had killed an African-American. Some believe this created political momentum to bring murder charges in spite of the facts and the law, particularly during a time when the district attorney was coming up for re-election in Baltimore. I can't confirm or deny whether this is true. But, as with the trial of the four NYPD officers who fired 41 shots at Amadou Diallo and were acquitted of all charges at trial, this case shows that if you did the right thing based on reasonable perception and acted within the law, justice should ultimately prevail over "the race card." It did this time.

### Be Skillful

Go ahead and carry hollow points. It's the safest ammo for all concerned, and has been proven to stop fights quicker. When the other side falsely accuses malicious intent in selecting this ammo, you and your expert witnesses will be able to shoot that allegation down as effectively as we did in this case.

Aim, don't just point. Kifer's first shotgun blast, hastily triggered without a visual index, missed entirely. Of Der's first point-fired shots, all missed their target except for a ricochet that struck Walker in the front of one shin. When Kifer triggered his last three shots in a sub-one second volley, the gun was at his shoulder and his eye could see the muzzle was on target; all three blasts inflicted dynamic, stopping hits. Der point-shot every round, and by the time he was dialed in and hitting, his .45 slugs still struck peripherally and by themselves quite possibly would not have brought Walker down. Had each man taken a fraction of a second to aim at the beginning, one or two +P .45 bullets and a shotgun blast entering from the front would very likely have dropped the antagonist. This would have prevented allegations of malice and murder based on "too many shots" and "shots in the back."

I want to thank the many contributors to the defense fund that financed the successful advocacy for Der and Kifer. They all helped to do justice.

(1) "Use of Lethal Force in Self Defense: What Prosecutors, Defenders and Policy-Makers Should Know," *American Law Institute/American Bar Association, 2001, \$166 postpaid from Police Bookshelf, PO Box 122, Concord, NH 03302.*

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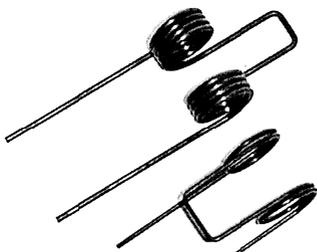
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## GUIDE RODS

Continued from page 57

over to a standard guide rod. To have any hope of significance the test had to have more than a couple of groups. I elected to shoot five, 10-shot groups at 25 yds. with each arrangement. Ammunition was Black Hills 230 gr. JHP from the same lot. (see chart)

I think it would be erroneous to say that accuracy was better with the standard guide rod because the small difference is unlikely to be statistically significant. I've been doing this type of testing for a long time and know full well if the test was done again there's a chance the results could reverse. But I do feel absolutely secure in my belief that the full length rod does not help accuracy.

## Disassembly Blues

One of Novak's points is they make it harder to disassemble the gun. Anyone who has tried will know that's true. But there is also a small risk of harm to accurized guns. Many match barrels have an area at the muzzle that is slightly larger (0.005-0.010") that fits the bushing. The best way to protect that fit is to pull the slide out of battery a bit before the bushing is turned. Rods prevent that.

**I do feel absolutely secure in my belief that the full length rod does not help accuracy.**

The long rods also require there be a hole in the mainspring plug. Even when the rod is not so long as to prevent disassembly in the normal manner putting things back together again can be a problem. You have to depress the mainspring plug and the inevitable sharp edges are hard on fingers. While it's not hard to launch a conventional mainspring plug either it's ever so much easier to have the one with a hole hit the ceiling.

Many of the guns we get today come with a full length guide rod. They do because of a well-designed marketing strategy that made shooters want them. And since perception is reality, rods are standard equipment. Now if your gun is working well with one installed and you have mastered the disassembly process, there's no compelling reason to take it out, but if you've got a standard gun that already works why would you want to spend twenty bucks or more fixing something that ain't broke?



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## CONNECTION

Continued from page 53

It's not unexpected, then, CRKT would produce the knifemakers' best seller — the Crawford/Kasper folder. Their basic model is virtually a mirror image of the original and comes in two sizes. The large Crawford/Kasper folder features a bead-blasted 3.87" blade and stretches out to 9.2" overall. The smaller version has a 3" blade and opens up to 7.12" in length. These folders are of Michael Walker liner-lock design but have an added roll-forward safety mechanism called LAWKS, co-designed by Walker and noted knifemaker Ron Lake. The blade is of AUS 6M stainless steel and can be had plain or partially serrated. The handle scales are made of durable textured black Zytel® over stainless steel liners, and a gray Teflon® coated pocket clip graces the backside. Affordable? You bet. The large Crawford/Kasper has a suggested retail of \$64.99; the smaller model is priced at \$59.99.

### New Knives

New for 2003 is a beefier version of the same folder, dubbed the Crawford/Kasper Professional. The blade

and handle sizes are the same as the large and small base models, but the handles are machined out of bullet-proof 6061 T6 aluminum, skeletonized to reduce weight and hard anodized in a deep charcoal finish. CRKT also upped the ante on blade steel on the professional models, going with a slightly tougher AUS 8 premium blade steel. The large and small Professional models are priced at \$99.00 and \$89.99 respectively.

**“All I heard was how well the pattern sold and, since I am a peddler at heart, this really caught my attention.”**

Those who like ultra-clean styling will delight in CRKT renditions of the Crawford Point Guard and Falcon folders. The Point Guard has a sleek spear point blade (AUS 6M stainless steel) with a slim, skeletonized handle of Zytel® scales over stainless steel liners to

match. Large and small versions are available, priced at \$49.99 and \$44.99 respectively. The Falcon model, with its re-curved clip point blade and bulged handle, is more curvaceous in design but features virtually the same construction as the Point Guard. The key traits of Crawford's Falcon model are a highly comfortable grip and a tenacious blade, both of which have translated quite well in the CRKT factory versions. Once again, large and small models are available — the former priced at \$59.99, that latter at \$54.99.

If you like the Falcon design but prefer a knife of the non-folding variety, the CRKT Crawford Fixed Falcon should fill the void. At 6" overall, this little fixed blade is small enough to wear around the neck or sheathed, and CRKT includes a black polycarbonate sheath that allows either. The Fixed Falcon weighs only 1.9 ounces thanks to a skeletonized handle and lightweight Zytel® scales and can be had in a choice of plain or partially serrated. Better yet, the entire package is priced at a suggested retail of only \$24.99. So who says you can't have your cake and eat it?



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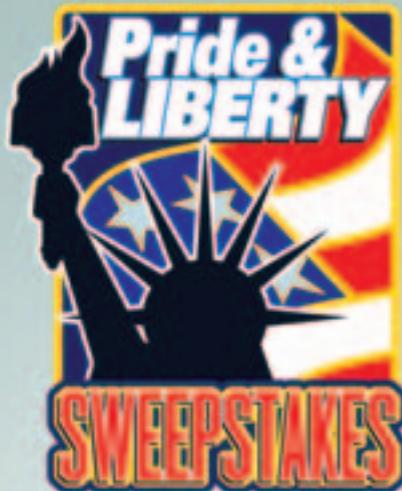
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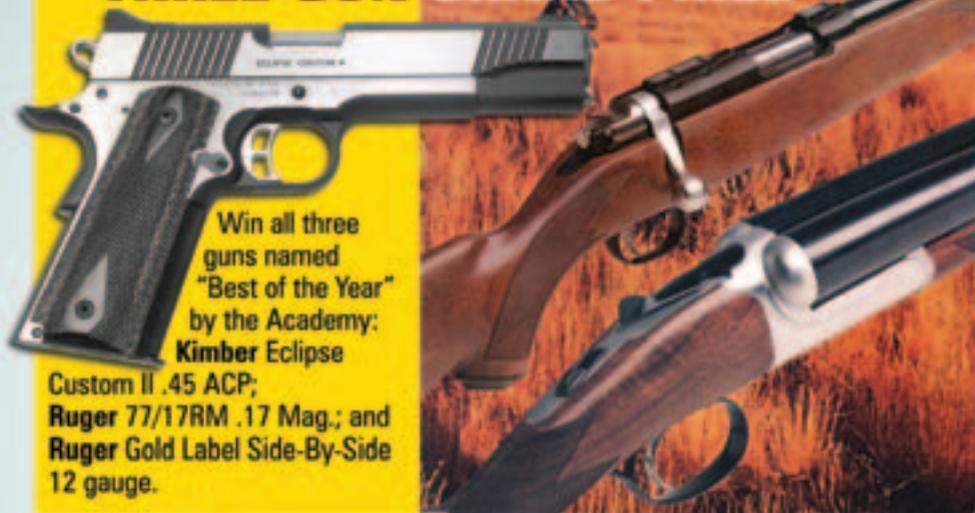
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## TAFFIN TESTS

Continued from page 26

“.44 Special,” and the original grips were long gone and replaced by a set of Ruger grips that did not fit very well. Even though the finish was well-worn, the \$125 price tag was very attractive. I asked permission to look at it and to also pull the cylinder to examine the condition of the barrel. The cylinder pin would not budge when the spring loaded catch was pressed and my fingers grasped the head of the base pin. “I want to buy this gun, however, I would like to see what the barrel looks like. Please pull the base pin while I look around a few more aisles.”

Returning a half-hour later, I found the gun was no longer on the table and had been set aside so they could work on getting the base pin out. I assured them I would buy the gun and be back again shortly. Returning later I found they had sold the gun even though I had told them I would take it. “The other guy was willing to take it without pulling the pin.” I was not pleased with their ethics, to say the least. I also realized there was only one other person in that entire gun show — besides myself — who would be interested in such a project gun.

I found friend and fellow writer Brian Pearce several aisles over. “Did you happen to buy that Great Western .44 Special?” He smiled and opened his coat to show me the Great Western stuffed in his belt. “They said you had been looking at it but decided you didn’t want it.” When he heard the real story he offered to sell it to me on the spot. “No, you got it fair and square on your part. It’s yours.” That was Saturday morning. Brian called me Sunday evening to tell me he had spent several hours working on getting the cylinder pin out by dismantling the gun and driving it out from the rear. He also discovered something else very interesting. The barrel, which was totally destroyed by the use of black powder with no cleaning, was marked .44 Special, however, the cylinder would accept a .45 Colt. What we had here was a movie prop gun that would accept blackpowder “5-in-1” blanks. Who knows, but just maybe some famous TV or movie Western star had used it extensively.

### Taffin Buys a Sixgun

I asked Brian if he planned to rebuild it. He thought he might sometime in the future, however, he also offered to sell it to me again if I wanted to use it as a project gun. By now the wheels had started to turn and I had great plans for the Great Western. In September 1955 during my last year in high school, a new type of TV Western arrived with a relatively unknown actor in the lead. John Wayne introduced that first episode with James Arness as Marshall Matt Dillon. Soon,

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virtually the entire country tuned in every Saturday night to watch Matt, Kitty, Chester and Doc and various other characters from Dodge City.

Matt used a 7.5" .45 Colt Single Action and eventually one of the new Arvo Ojala Hollywood Fast Draw holsters. In fact, he gunned down Arvo Ojala in the opening of each episode for several years. In 1957, I purchased my first 7.5" Colt Single Action — in what else but .45 Colt? Then one year later custom ordered an Arvo Ojala rig. Matt went for plain brown, I decided on black basket weave. While waiting for my belt and holster to come in, I felt I had met my dream girl. She was blond and beautiful, and most importantly, paid attention to me. The ultimate test would be our first date. One evening she drove the 10 miles to the gun shop with me to pick up my Ojala rig. I figured I would tell by her reaction to where we were going and what I was buying — whether or not she would really be my dream girl.

She was nearly as excited about my leather and sixgun as I was, even though she had never fired a gun in her life. Forty-five years later I still have that Ojala rig, and more importantly Dot has proven to be my dream girl and most enthusiastic supporter. We have shared life's ups and downs, three kids, eight grandkids and we still shoot together. In fact last Saturday she shot Modern Class while I participated

in Duelist and Frontier Cartridge at our local Cowboy Action Shoot. Afterward she shared she thought she might like to try shooting in the black powder class. Yep, she is still my dream girl.

Gunsmoke ran for several decades and now, thanks to videotapes and cable TV, is still seen virtually every day in virtually every part of the country. Since this Great Western had been a movie gun (Early episodes showed him using a Great Western, could it have actually been used by Matt?), I decided to rebuild this old single action to honor Matt and all the other characters of Gunsmoke. It would be a real "Saturday Night Special." All-new internal parts were ordered from Brownells. A search through my parts box revealed a Colt Single Action cylinder chambered in .45 Colt along with a real treasure. More than 25 years ago I spent the princely sum of \$5 for a used 7.5" .45 Colt Great Western barrel. It has been in my shop ever since waiting for the right project. This was definitely the right project.

### Coming Together

Shot-out sixgun and parts were taken to Mike Rainey, resident gunsmith at Shapel's. He put everything together, tuned the action and even shimmed under the back of the collar button base pin bushing of the Colt cylinder to adapt it to the slightly longer frame of the Great

Western. The resulting sixgun is a joy to my soul, heart and spirit. Not only does the Great Western function smoothly, it also shoots! Using 8.0 grains of Unique under an Oregon Trail 255 grain bullet or RCBS's #45-270 grain bullet over 17.0 grains of XMR 5744 — or just about any other combination — results in five-shot groups right at 1". How about that?

That would be the end of the story except for the reader who knew I semi-collected plastic stag grips such as those found on the original Great Westerns and also made by both Fitz and Franzite, for virtually every other revolver well into the 1950s. I never pay more than \$5 for a pair of these grips, however, he said he had a beautiful pair in perfect shape that I could have for \$15 postpaid. What I got was not the typical hollow plastic stag grips, but rather solid, heavy-duty, plastic stag grips as found on many movie guns prior to World War II. In fact, Tom Mix had such a pair on his 7.5" .38-40 Colt Single Action. These now reside on my Saturday Night Special.

Gone, long gun, are the days when network TV entertained us with the likes of *Gunsmoke*, *Have Gun, Will Travel*, *Bonanza*, *Maverick*, *Cheyenne* and dozens of other bits of Western Americana. My Saturday Night Special will continue to bring back many pleasant memories of a most enjoyable time of my life.



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## WALTHER PPKS

Continued from page 47

First in blue steel and later in stainless, Interarms sold the American made PPK/S pistols and a tiny version called the TPH. The last Walther pistol imported by Interarms was the P-99, Walther's entry into the polymer frame pistol market.

After the death of founder Sam Cummings, Interarms fortunes declined. At the same time Umarex, the parent company of Walther, began a series of deals with Smith & Wesson that first involved licensing and progressed quickly to manufacturing arrangements as well. The first thing the U.S. consumer saw was the SW-99, a mildly-changed version of the P-99 that coupled a frame imported from Walther with a top end slide and barrel made by Smith & Wesson. That operation continues with SW-99 pistols in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP.

### American Know-How

The latest news is Smith & Wesson has begun to manufacture the PPK/S at their Houlton, Maine plant. Houlton has never exactly been a secret but isn't too well known either. It began as a plant to make handcuffs and knives some time ago and has grown to be the home of S&W's .22 autopistols, including the famed Model 41. It isn't much more than a chip shot from the Canadian border and is located on an old World War II airstrip that served as a departure point for ferry flights across the Atlantic.

The PPK/S is made under a license agreement, but in the process S&W and Walther engineers gave the little gun a thorough modernization. "We looked at every part to see what we could do to improve it," said Kurt Hindle, S&W's Director of Walther products. And the other good news is S&W may be able to service older Walthers as well. Be sure to call and check with S&W.

You'd be hard-pressed to see most of the changes, but there are many. One you can see, and rejoice over, is the extension of the beavertail by about half an inch. One of the characteristics of all the older guns is they cheerfully bit the hand that held them. The short-recoil tang — another way to name it — caused the gun to dig into the web of the hand under recoil. The blowback operation is perfectly fine for the .380 ACP, but there is some recoil to deal with. The beavertail extension truly works wonders and makes the pistol ever so much easier to shoot.

One of the things you probably won't see are the railroad tracks that tended to get carved into your hand by the slide. The beavertail helps with this, but S&W included an aggressive deburring operation on sharp edges. This is one of those things told from personal experience, for when I got one of the early American

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made stainless steel pistols, the first shot left a pair of bloody grooves in the web of my hand that ended that day's shooting. I can't say they were all like that, but mine sure was. A bunch of knife makers would have been proud of that edge.

Another improvement on creature comfort? Gone are the serrations on the trigger. When you are dealing with a double-action that is long and heavy, the serrations do nothing but cause discomfort.

**“One of the characteristics of all the older guns is they cheerfully bit the hand that held them.”**

Sometimes *how* a gun is made can be a big deal. This is called process-engineering and here is a great example. In the original pistols the feed ramps of barrel and frame are cut before the barrel is pressed into the barrel shroud. The effect is that sometimes the two cuts don't line up right and one is said to "stand proud" from the other. This is probably responsible for the difficulties sometimes shown in feeding hollowpoint ammo. That was a fairly common complaint on older guns, although the U.S.-made Interarms pistols didn't seem to show the problem. During the review of the process they found the modern CNC machines they were going to use could easily cut both ramps in one operation after the barrel was pressed in. There is no possibility for misalignment anymore. CNC manufacture has some other benefits that are invisible, or hard to measure. Tolerances are much closer which, according to Hindle, translates into better durability and accuracy. Another invisible change is a switch to a tougher material called Zytel, for the grips.

### Newer Is Better

In keeping with S&W's policy of adding a "dash" number each time there is a significant engineering change on a model, the test gun is the PPK/S-1 and, were it not for the markings and longer beavertail, we'd be challenged to see the difference.

But in simplest terms: it works. No glitches or bobbles and feed and function were flawless. As is common, the PPK/S-1 comes with two magazines — one with a finger extension and the other plain — both worked equally well.

The only negative concerns the double action trigger pull, which measured 15.5 lbs. on my certified weights. This isn't a criticism of S&W's effort here, but seems par for the course when compared to some older guns. The difficulty is in the mechanics of the design. In order to

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achieve the small size that makes the PPK so popular, the mechanical advantage between trigger, draw bar and hammer is restricted. Put another way, there simply isn't room enough for good leverage.

On the other hand, the single-action was very consistent at a tad over 5 lbs. (5 lbs. 2 oz. to be precise) with a small amount of creep. Extensive accuracy testing was foregone in favor of a more practical challenge of shooting at a 6" diameter steel target at ranges from 7 to 25 yards. At a slow deliberate pace there was no challenge at all, except for the first double-action shot, which was iffy. It's probably more my problem than the gun's, but it awfully hard *not* to jerk the trigger double-action. I'm sure some serious training on my part would resolve the issue. To sum up: accuracy is not an issue for the gun, but the shooter may need some work.

And, to be fair the trigger improved a bit with use as the test wore on, so I gave it the gong test. My range has a 14" diameter steel plate set 70 yds. from the firing line. This has become my favorite target by far, because you get the instant "clang" for feedback and the assurance if you can keep shots on the gong at that range, accuracy simply isn't an issue. Shooting Rem-UMC generic ball ammo I was consistently able to get 70-80 percent success and once got nine out of ten. All it took was to learn the appropriate Kentucky elevation — windage was ok — which required a hold that was almost dead at 12:00 on the gong. You could see just a tad of the gong over the front sight, but not too much, and if that was where the front sight was when the shot broke, the gong rang.

Mixed in with the gong shooting was a thorough function test with a great variety of hollowpoint ammunition that included rounds from all the major makers: Federal 90 gr. Hydra-shok, Speer 90 gr. Gold Dot, Remington 102 gr. Golden Saber and Winchester 95 gr. SXT. There were no stoppages of any kind. We already know all of these expand nicely when fired from the Walther's 3.4" barrel. Ammo simply isn't a problem.

### Classic Is Good

Even though the PPK/S could almost be a classic for longevity, it's still a fine choice for personal protection. With a good holster, it's easily concealed, and 7+1 capacity is enough to solve most realistic problems. But the real news is the most glaring fault has been eliminated with the lengthening of the beavertail. It really changes how the gun feels when you shoot it too, for instead of the short part digging into the web of your hand, the recoil forces are much more evenly distributed. And, the fact S&W makes it here in the USA only  sweetens the deal if you ask me.

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## SILENT FORCE

Continued from page 53

today, attesting to his vision and sound approach to tactical knife design.

As the tactical folder market picked up steam in the early nineties, Crawford and his fellow tac-folder makers were in the driver's seat. Dressed-up versions of these folders using exotic steels and handle materials were common, and remain popular — primarily among collectors — today.

Crawford's designs have always been clean and pragmatic. He was one of the first to make skeletonized handles, a technique in which holes or other designs are drilled out of the frame side to lighten the overall weight. He still uses this technique on a wide variety of models and they sell quite well. Crawford's folders are extremely well built, no doubt due to the demands of his tactical clientele. Failure is simply not an option.

One final trait on all of Pat's knives is outstanding fit and finish. Pat and son Wes — a full time member of the Crawford Knives team — pay as much attention in this area as they do the basics, and it shows in the end result. Holding a Crawford knife is like fondling a fine Swiss watch. You can close your eyes and tell the quality is there strictly by the feel of the knife. In his short thirty years Wes has learned the art of knife-making well. He's been working in the Crawford shop ever since he was old enough to earn spending money sweeping the floor. By age twenty he was fully involved in the operation and today Wes can whip out a knife just as quick as his Dad.

### Alternative Edges

Extreme diversity is the byword on the Crawford Knives line. Take any given model and Pat Crawford can make it more ways than Baskin Robbins. A basic knife might be offered in a solid titanium frame or with liners of the same topped with G-10 synthetic overlays. The same knife model can be done upscale by using titanium liners and bolsters combined with an exotic handle scale such as fossil mammoth ivory or mother of pearl.

By offering such prolific choices, Crawford has been able to maintain a broad customer base of both serious users and arduous collectors over the years. To keep things simple when discussing the knife-maker's various models, we'll deal in proportions and characteristics as opposed to exact materials, as these can vary widely.

The most popular model in the Crawford Knives line is the Kasper folder, a joint effort between the knifemaker and renown combat expert and instructor Bob Kasper. This knife is offered in two sizes — the standard model sports a 3.8" blade and opens to 9.25" overall, the Mini

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checks in with a 3" blade and is 7.25" opened. The Kasper handle is deep, perfect for those with larger hands, and an ample finger groove offers excellent hand protection. The blade has a deep grind for added slice and a saber grind on the back-side improves puncture power.

**Exotic blade steels,  
hi-tech handle  
materials, and curious  
designs are all part  
of the ride.**

The sleekest folders in the Crawford line are the Perfigo and Perseco models. Bob Kasper collaborations as well, these two models have identical handles and differ only in blade styles. Both models have lengthy 4.5" blades and an overall length of 10.25". The Perfigo has one of the swoopiest drop point blades you'll find, thanks in part to a recurved edge that adds extra length to the cutting edge. The Perseco model has a flat-edged Wharn-cliff blade, a style that makes for excellent all round utility. The handle is notable for its deep finger choil and flared base, both features that enhance the grip. Both knives feature skeletonized handles and an integral frame-lock for positively locking the blade.

### Simply Sweet

If sweet and simple are your tastes, the Falcon series should fill the bill. A member of Crawford's Raptor series, this is one of Crawford's seasoned designs that just keeps on selling. Two sizes are available: the standard model has a 4" blade and is 9.25" in overall length; the Mini version has a 3" blade and opens up to 7.25". The Falcon blade is a drop point style with a recurved edge that folds into a simple flared and bulged handle. A fixed blade version of the Falcon is also available in the Raptor line.

Many custom knifemakers abandon fixed blades once they have established themselves in the folder-end of the business. Not Crawford. He built his business on straight knives and continues to keep a robust selection in his lineup. All of his fixed blades are of full-tang construction for optimum strength. One of the most versatile fixed blades offered is the Peregrine. An all round workhorse, the Peregrine has a 3.4" blade that can perform both combat and light field chores with equal ease. At 7" overall, the knife is the perfect size for everyday carry, made even easier by weight saved by skeletonizing the handle. For those who need more beef and bite, the Peregrine Thrust model has a 5.5" blade.

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power to boot, Crawford's Black Hawk fixed blade fighter is bound to please. The Black Hawk features a sleek 5.25" black boron carbide-coated spear point blade and a black Micarta handle that excels in comfort. At 9.75" over, this is a knife that can perform heavy field chores and combat, should the occasion arise. A notched thumb ramp and fully sculptured and handle scales make this knife a delight to handle and lightening holes help shift the weight to the business end, as well as lessen the load.

Crawford also offers an array of neck knives for those who prefer lightweight protection concealed carry. The Fixed Falcon neck knife, with its compressed 2.12" clip point blade, packs a lot of punch for a compact knife just a half-foot in overall length. The knock on many neck knives is a wimpy handle, but not so here. The Fixed Falcon has plenty of grip in both length and width and is fleshed out with Micarta scales. If good things do indeed come in small packages, this one comes with a bow. There are other neck knives — as well as folders and fixed blades — in the Crawford Knives line that deserve mention, but it would be impossible to cover them all in this space.

### Functional, Affordable

If you're new to the world of custom knives it is, no doubt, easy to be dazzled by the flash of it all. Exotic blade steels, hi-tech handle materials, and curious designs are all part of the ride — but they don't necessarily make a good, functional knife. Once the wheat has been separated from the chaff, it's important to realize that pure tactical knifemakers with the many years of experience of guys like Pat Crawford can be counted on two hands. Years of designing and selling knives to serious law enforcement and Special Ops personnel have given Crawford valuable insight into what these highly trained users want and need. That experience goes into every knife the Crawfords make.

Despite the "custom" tag, Crawford Knives are affordable. If you're on a budget, you can ease into a Crawford neck knife for around \$150. Their large fixed blade knives start at around \$350, and a solid Crawford folder can be had for \$375. Upscale folders with exotic materials such as Damascus steel and fossil mammoth ivory scales average \$700 and up, depending on the extent of materials and build-time required. If custom prices are out of the question, check out the nice array of factory Crawford fixed blade and folder designs offered by Columbia River Knife & Tool in the special sidebar we've devoted to these knives. 

For more information contact, Crawford Knives; phone: (870) 732-2452; web: [www.crawfordknives.com](http://www.crawfordknives.com); e-mail: [pat@crawfordknives.com](mailto:pat@crawfordknives.com)



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## BEST GUN

Continued from page 64

gun great. You can say the devil is in the details, but only an artist can understand which details are important and which are superfluous. Only an artist understands that for a gun to achieve its true potential, it has to be more than the sum of its parts, that it has to connect on both a physical and — dare I say it? — a spiritual level to the hand that holds it. I mean, both a \$1.99 Ginzu knife and a Kamakura Period *daito-katana* can cut rope just fine; only one transcends.

### Back in the Real World

So I sent my parts away to Arkansas and fielded the occasional call on specifics. Two-tone Robar finish, Carbon Creations carbon fiber grips, Wilson magazines ... little of this, little of that.

The months grind on, and the strangest thing happened. USPSA and practical pistol begin to morph, and single stacks in plain old boring .45 are hot again. The first Factory Gun Nationals are held, and ancient, creaking Rob Leatham, complete with knee braces, wins the new Limited-10 (no optics or compensators, 10-round capacity limit) with an brand-new-but-ancient-creaking-design Springfield 1911 longslide in .45 ACP, it's only concession to "raceguns" a fiber optic front sight.

All of a sudden, instead of an homage to the Old Days, Ross is once again building a state-of-the-art racegun.

"Who'd'a thought?" he says, and keeps filing.

Okay, your thinking. We've covered the Old Days and we've talked about the gun. So where's the miracle thingie?

Hang on; it's coming.

So one night we have this long, rambling conversation. Ross is, he says, in a pretty good place — gunsmith business backed up, his car dealership cranking along, even a brand spanking new, three-month old house, no more fix-it-upper stuff, with a small basement shop for when he absolutely, positively must work in the middle of the night. "I left all the smelly, poisonous stuff at the main shop," he says, joking. "Just a couple of files in case I need 'em."

The next week, a weekday evening, Ross is sitting in his home shop waiting for the tip of his little soldering iron to heat up. A lead has come loose on an red-dot sight, and he figures he'll just fire up the iron and set it right. He sits and watches the little iron heat up, wisps of smoke coming off the tip, which finally starts to glow red...

Later, investigators will say the explosion that ripped the new house apart began the instant the tip of the soldering iron reached incandescence. They will shake their heads in puzzlement —

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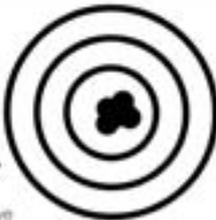
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Ross Carter is burning, rolling on the floor. His girlfriend races in and struggles to extinguish the flames, get him clear of the nightmare flames that have engulfed their home. Then there are sirens and ambulances and a desperate race to the closest hospital with a major burn unit in Springfield, MO.

**“We’ve covered the Old Days and we’ve talked about the gun. So where’s the miracle thingie?”**

Two days later, I get a call from Mike McGovern at Ross' shop, asking if I'd heard. He outlines the events; the prognosis is grim — Ross has third degree burns over most of his body. The survival rate for massive burn injuries is not good.

“They were wheeling him into surgery,” Mike says finally, “and Ross made me promise to call you to tell you not to worry about the gun.”

“\$#&\*! the gun, I said.

“No,” Mike says firmly. “It’s important to Ross. The gun will be finished.”

A few weeks later a package arrives.

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So here’s the miracle.

After 50 days in the hospital and five weeks of home convalescence; against everybody’s advice; wrapped in pressure bandages and still oh-so susceptible to potentially lethal infections, Ross Carter forces himself to get up and go to the range. His hands won’t work well enough to hold a handgun yet, so he takes a shotgun, determined to shoot a round of trap.

“I was determined,” he says. “I was so weak, the last five rounds it was all I could do to hold the gun up.”

He scored 22 out of 25 clays, and he goes home in pain, but with the sincere knowledge that he will be back.

I open the package, and it is, quite frankly, the best-looking 1911 I have ever seen. No, more than “best-looking,” it is perfect. From the hand-



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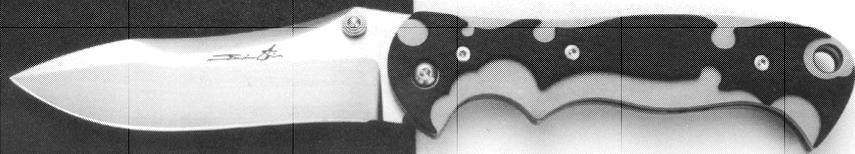
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Look at the pictures — they tell the story better than I can.

Does the work of art shoot? When it was function-tested in the white, it was producing sub-two inch groups at 50 yards with range reloads.

Some shooting friends were over for dinner, and the Carter gun was the first thing I've ever had that left them pretty much speechless. Finally, one of my friends asked, "What would it cost me to duplicate this?"

**I could put the parts  
together, and it'd  
probably go bang.  
It'd still be just  
junk in a box.**

I told him he could have the parts' list, but I believe the gun itself is a one-of-a-kind. The staggering amount of hand-fitting, polishing and precision that went into the longslide was not about money, or a project, or an article. It was, I think, part and parcel of almost three decades of camaraderie, of shared experiences and hotly argued positions, of hundreds of thousands of rounds launched downrange in pursuit of an excellence we hoped to find in ourselves. At the risk of embarrassing Ross, I said, it's a gun born of friendship, and it is unique.

And that's why I'm giving it away.

Here's the deal. Our mutual friend Bill Wilson has agreed to host a raffle on his website, [www.WilsonCombat.com](http://www.WilsonCombat.com). Go there for the details, but the short story is that \$25 buys you a shot at the Best Gun I Never Owned, including the right to fire the first shot from the finished gun. Before you decide how many tickets to buy, you might want to consider what 50 days a top-notch burn unit might cost without insurance. And consider that you'll pass this one down to your kids.

Ross is in the shop every day, and some of those days are better than others. As soon as he catches up with the backlog, I intend to talk to him about a gun I have in mind, a lightweight short .38 Super. Nothing special.



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## SIXGUNNER

Continued from page 35

was an ivory stocked Colt Single Action Army 7.5" .44 Special with a steer head carved on the right grip, a wide hammer, a Smith & Wesson-type rear sight, a front sight held on by a barrel band and a King short action. This old sixgun shows considerable wear but still locks-up tightly. I would guess it was used extensively. The ivory stocks have the Colt Medallion inset into them and I assume these are original Colt stocks.

**“This was the gun he used to make his famous six hundred yard shot to stop a mule deer that had been wounded by some other hunter.”**

The most famous sixgun connected with Elmer Keith at least during the second quarter of the 20th-century was his #5SA. This Colt was featured in the article entitled *The Last Word*, which appeared in the April 1929 issue of *The American Rifleman*. Keith considered this the finest possible sixgun that could be created, hence the title. Every possible improvement from his mind, and also the minds of several gunsmiths, was incorporated in #5SA sixgun and it turned out so well Keith tried to interest Colt in making it a factory offered single action. No one in Hartford would listen to him.

Keith, along with gunsmiths and gunranks (as he called them) of the time — Harold Croft, Neal Houchins, R.F. Sedgley and J.D. O'Meara — all added their ideas and expertise to the #5SA. The top strap of a standard Colt Single Action was welded-up to make a heavy flat-top target design. Improvements included replacing the flat main-spring with a U-type spring, the hammer shape was made by welding a Bisley wide hammer on a standard hammer, the rear sight is adjustable, and the front sight is a high Patridge-type. The base pin latch was changed to eliminate any chance of the pin jumping forward under recoil, while the grip frame was created by mating a standard Colt SA trigger guard with a Colt Bisley back-strap. The grip of the #5SA Colt was made for Keith's relatively small hands, however most shooters would find it to

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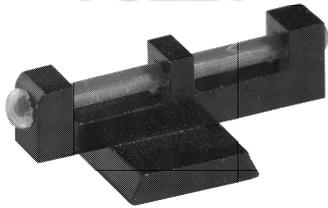
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be very comfortable. Its influence today is seen in Freedom Arms Model 83 and Ruger's Bisley.

Keith's favorite sixgun cartridge from 1927 to 1955 was the .44 Special. However, he did not completely abandon the .45 Colt Single Action. He still favored a 4 1/4" barreled model, with S&W type adjustable rear sight, barrel band front sight and ivory stocks. When I was granted the great privilege of examining his sixguns after his going Home, I found this one still loaded with five rounds of factory ammo that I'm pretty sure were black powder rounds. Before the .44 Magnum arrived Keith often said if he had to depend on factory ammunition, his choice would be the .45 Colt.

This .45 Colt, with a wide hammer spur, is also interesting in that it has a special stud on the left side of the gun, replacing the hammer screw. The stud fitted on a clip fastened to the belt and the Colt swung on the clip without a holster, ready for instant use. This clip is known as the Jesse Thompson rig. This old .45 sixgun exhibits much blue wear. I would guess Keith carried it a lot on the quick-draw belt clip. Single actions were his obvious favorites for about 30 years, or until he moved into town and found it much more practical to carry a 4" double action Smith & Wesson. His first was a 1950 4" Smith & Wesson .44 Special, which would soon to be replaced by the same basic sixgun chambered for the .44 Magnum.

### Four to Draw-To

Keith had four short barreled double action Smith and Wesson .44s that were his favorite packin' pistols. The first was the aforementioned .44 Special 4" 1950 Target Model. This gun is fully engraved, with a blue finish and fitted with ivory stocks that have a steer head carved on the right grip. The steer head carved grip was an obvious favorite as it is found on three of the four .44 DA's. I've always wondered how Keith could handle the recoil of the heavy loaded .44 Special — and the subsequent .44 Magnum — when fired in these relatively lightweight sixguns with standard Magna style grips with no filler behind the trigger guard. I tried it with standard wood grips and got nailed, and painfully so. After handling Keith's sixguns I understood perfectly. The carving on the right grip naturally filled in the crease in the shooting hand perfectly and did much to help control felt recoil.

The first .44 Magnum from Smith & Wesson had a 6.5" barrel. Keith preferred this length for hunting and, in fact, this was the gun he used to make his famous six hundred yard shot to stop a mule deer that had been wounded by some other hunter. However for convenience of carry a 6.5" sixgun was soon cut to 4.5", and engraved and stocked by the now-defunct Gun Reblue Co. This

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sixgun was featured in the 1958 *Gun Digest*. It too is a beautiful specimen, with its full engraving and steerhead grips and like all of the .44s, has Keith's signature on the sideplate. This was the first of Keith's three short-barreled .44 Magnum sixguns. The second example was presented to Keith by Carl Hellstrom, then president of Smith & Wesson. This was one of the first factory 4" .44 Magnums. It was also fully engraved and ivory stocked, with an eagle carved on the right grip and a brass presentation medallion.

“ This is the type of book that, started in the evening, could easily result in one's reading all through the night. ”

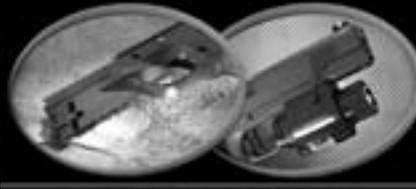
His everyday working gun was the third short-barreled .44 Magnum. It was obviously a favorite as it was carried daily and shows extensive blue wear. This is a standard blued .44 Magnum except for the ivory stocks and his name engraved on the sideplate. All the rest of his .44s were carried in floral carved holsters; this everyday working gun was carried in a plain Milt Sparks' FBI style. He helped to design this holster by asking for a hammer extension to protect the inside lining of his coat. Many years ago, Elmer's son Ted Keith verified this was the sixgun Keith packed everyday.

Keith led what on the surface seems to be an ideal life. He spent the vast majority of his life guiding, outfitting, hunting, and shooting. He also went through much heartache and pain. He survived several devastating fires, attacks of influenza and lost his first child, Druzilla to influenza. He himself was so sick with the flu he could not even attend her funeral. His most interesting life is chronicled in his autobiography *Hell, I Was There!* This is the type of book that, started in the evening, could easily result in one's reading all through the night. Many of the sixguns I have mentioned are found in his book *Sixguns By Keith*. First published in 1955, and updated in 1961, it still remains a valuable resource. After his death, plans were made to have a museum built housing all of his firearms, game trophies and memorabilia. Those plans did not materialize and the public will probably never get to see his sixguns on display. I hope these pictures help in some small way.



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## SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 16

and I am very familiar with them.

Why no discussion of the atrocious internal grip safety fit problems constantly grating on the trigger bow? You can actually feel the arm working on the trigger bow on every SW 1911 example I have ever tested (8-10 different guns).

In all of these guns the grip safety would not release the firing pin unless the grip was intentionally and forcefully held in tight all the way against the frame. Even then, you could feel — and even see — the trigger bow working against the interior actuating arm of the grip safety before it eventually released. This may be overlooked and accepted on a Chinese or Filipino 1911, but certainly not on a gun in this price range. If you compare the Kimber's grip safety/trigger pull you will feel the difference.

Whether this is an inherent "Schwartz safety" design-defect or only a fitting/assembly problem, it must be fixed at once. When will some brave gun maker finally eliminate this ancient 1911, horse cavalry grip safety anachronism? While I found the fit and finish of the SW 1911 to be superb, along with its two great Wilson mags and Novak sights, I was deeply disappointed with the grip safety/trigger problem. Smith can, and must, do better — especially at this price point and quality level.

David Mayer  
Miami Beach, FL

### Competition = Training?

Was looking in the Sept/Oct 1991 issue of *American Handgunner* and saw an article about the festivities celebrating the 15th anniversary of the founding of IPSC. There, Ken Hackathorn said cops often ask him whether to compete in IPSC matches. He said, "I have to tell them, if they are serious about surviving, don't shoot IPSC ... I can't tell people to take part because I see so many courses of fire that make you do things that are stupid or suicidal."

Jim Cirillo explained how he shot an El Presidente (two rounds on each of three targets, reload, repeat): "I shot once at each target, then went back and shot once more at each, then I did my reload and repeated. So I shot a poor score, and maybe looked silly doing it, and people may say I'm making a big thing out of nothing. But I will not do something or teach something in training that has the potential to get me killed. I don't care what people think or what my score was. You will do in combat what you do in training." Despite all the protestations of others, one of the greatest modern gunfighters clearly recognized that matches are training.

On the same page, Ken Hackathorn was quoted as saying, "There are always

some who start agitating to pull out of IPSC whenever they don't get their way." Apparently he still thought IPSC could be saved then, felt it was worth saving, and wanted to save it. Yet just a few years later, he and several other founders of IPSC did indeed pull out and created IDPA to avoid the gamesmanship that had consumed IPSC.

Based on what I see passing as IDPA courses of fire, and what handguns, holsters, and pouches I see people using at matches, I believe IDPA in 2003 is about where IPSC was in 1991. We have got to stop sweating foot faults, and we have got to design courses an ordinary human being might actually encounter in real life, and we have got to stop rewarding tactics that will get us killed on the street, and we have got to begin using only those weapons, holsters, etc. we actually carry daily, and we have got to carry them only where they will stay concealed.

The fact that some gamesman-inspired rule permits something else should not be good enough. If IDPA continues to go the way of IPSC, we'll all be buying hats, decals, and rule books from some new organization in a few years.

Mack Rudisill  
Orlando, FL

*Mack, it's always good to raise some points like this now and again. Like my Dad always said, "If you don't stir the pot once and a while, a scum will form." Consider the pot stirred and let's hope all the factions learn from mistakes previously made. After all, shooting and training can actually be fun, with a minimum of finger-pointing and nay-saying. Imagine that. Editor*

## Correction

*In "Combat Shooting" (July/Aug 2003), we list Bill Wilson, Walt Rauch and John Sayle as founding members of IPSC. While all three were heavily involved in USPSA/IPSC in the past, they were not founding members. Two gentlemen who are both original founding members of both IPSC and IDPA are Ken Hackathorn and Richard Thomas.*

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# GUNNYSACK

Charles E. Petty

## REMOONER

The Brownells catalog is the modern equivalent of the Sears book of a century ago — at least as far as shooters are concerned. Early each year a new one arrives and it's mandatory to spend some time checking out new stuff. That's where I found the "Remooner."

I am a longtime fan of revolvers that shoot the .45 ACP cartridge, but detest loading the full or half-moon clips you need to use with the standard case. Loading the gun with full moon clips is incredibly fast but loading the clips themselves is a blood-letting experience. The Remooner is strange looking and it takes a few minutes to figure out how it works, but once you do it is simplicity itself. You put six cartridges in the holes provided, place a moon clip around the center hub and then use the Remooner's levers to snap the ammo into the clips. It takes far longer to write this than it does to load a clip.

There are six molded plastic (actually the whole thing is molded plastic) levers and to snap the rounds into the clip you must press two opposing levers together at the same time. Makes sense, since if you tried to do just one, everything would want to fly away. The way it seems to work best for me is to use one hand to hold the base to keep it from sliding, the other operates the levers and I generally turn it a bit to bring the next pair of levers into position. It takes seconds to do it. The advantage of full



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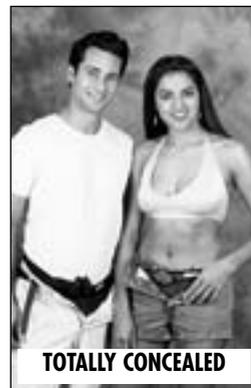
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## 1911 BALL BEARING TRIGGER

**F**ranksly I probably wouldn't have noticed this item had it not been for the tribulations a good friend had just gone through trying to install a better trigger in his 1911 clone. It required extensive filing and that is a skill that should not be learned on expensive parts.

Carlos Castillo has crafted a light-weight aluminum trigger that looks exactly like everybody else's when it's in the gun, but there are tiny (about 0.10" diameter) ball bearings permanently installed on the top and bottom of the trigger bow that allow it to move freely in the trigger track. Castillo recommends using a special stone to smooth up the cut in the gun, but that's a considerable expense if you're only going to do one or two triggers. My experience suggests his triggers fit very nicely and that step can probably be skipped for most guns.

I installed two of these triggers in different pistols with no difficulty at

all. Anyone who can safely detail strip a 1911 pistol can do this job with no special tools. Trigger take-up was very smooth. Both pistols already had good trigger jobs so there was no reduction in pull weight. Before and after measurements were the same.

Logic would suggest a stock trigger could be helped a little. The trigger stop installed is already set, but if adjustment is needed the screw is located on the back side of the trigger bow and requires disassembly for adjustment.

There are quite a few options in finish and length and one of those I tried was nicely polished and had no serrations on the face of the trigger. That felt especially good and is going to make me polish a couple of old triggers. 



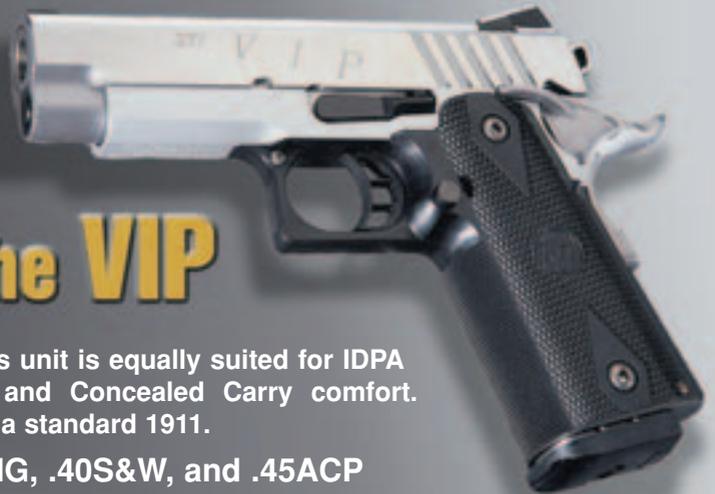
*Castillo's Custom Actions, 703 Frederick St., Panama City, FL 32045; (850) 769-5091; [www.1911ballbearingtrigger.com](http://www.1911ballbearingtrigger.com)*

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**W**hat are two things we're likely to need and not have? How about a pocketknife and a flashlight? Tool Logic has a good idea in their "SL Survival Series" of combination tools. This is the kind of thing that should be in the survival kit of anyone who ventures afield much further than the mall, but could also serve handily as an everyday pocketknife.

They have several, but the one we have here is the SL-1, which combines an LED flashlight with a 3" lock blade knife with a 50/50 combination smooth and serrated blade. A shrill survival whistle is an integral part of the aluminum handle. The handle is black anodized, with a roughened non-slip finish.

The flashlight is said to be water-resistant and is turned on by rotating the knurled lens portion about a quarter turn. The light

is the typical bluish tinge seen with LEDs and is remarkably bright for its tiny size. Another variation, the SL-3, replaces the flashlight with a magnesium fire starter that might be great for those who go way beyond the mall.

So far I've managed to avoid needing rescue or survival tools, but the SL-1 has found a home in the little ditty bag that rides in one of those conveniently hidden compartments in the car. It joins a first aid kit, spare ammo and other stuff I might need someday. This is a clever, inexpensive gadget to have handy. 

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## MEACHAM CUSTOM GRIPS

Lately, I have fallen badly under the influence of single-action revolvers. I have *always* been a fan of great craftsmanship. So, let me show you some of Jerry Meacham's work. His specialty is ivory grips for single-action revolvers. Most of his are one-piece ivory but he also does beautiful work in walnut and other exotic woods, plus stag and mother of pearl. While the vast majority of his work is on single-action revolvers he also does grips for most S&W revolvers, other Colts and a few autopistols, such as the 1911. The traditional western carvings of steer heads, eagles, and buffalo heads that were common decorations on old ivory and pearl grips are well within the range of his talent

Meacham started making grips in 1960 because he didn't like the way store-bought grips fit and felt. As it is with so many craftsmen in our business, his hobby became a full time job in 1994.

Obviously each work is highly individualized and fitted to the gun, but the good news is that, for single-actions you need only send the grip frame. The other good news is he is fast, with an average turnaround time for plain grips at around three



weeks. Prices begin at \$135 for simple wood. Ivory is such scarce stuff that prices for it average around \$400.

Pictures really are worth heaps of words but sometimes they don't capture the incredible beauty and variety we see in real ivory. Every time you look at them they're just a little different and as they age they do nothing but become more impressive. I'm going to use these and watch them grow old gracefully.



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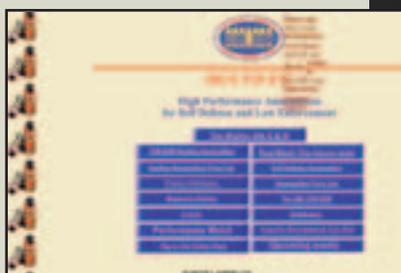
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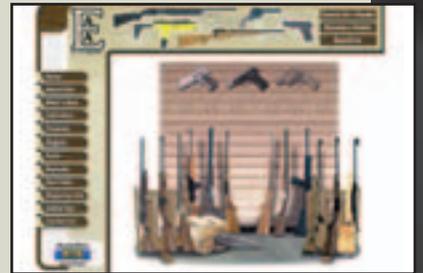
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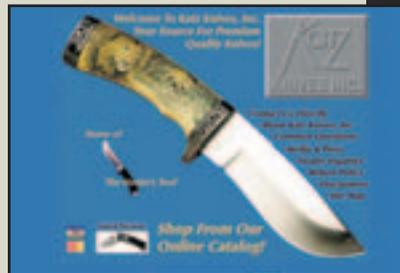
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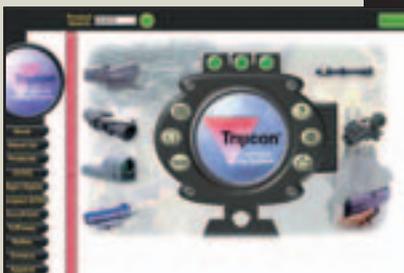
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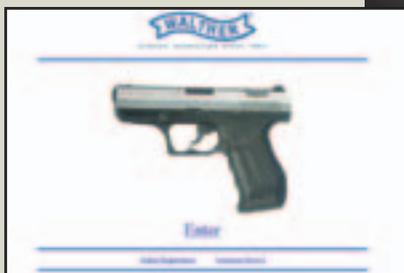
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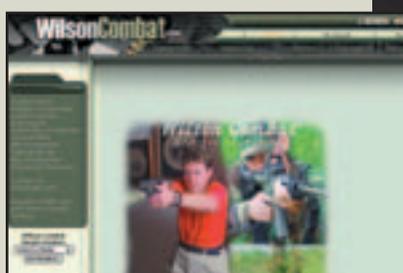
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**SAVAGE STRIKER**

Continued from page 67

is likely, handgun hunters flock to the Striker, they will need some way to carry it. A sling can also be a valuable shooting aid in the field.

I've already told you about the recoil, but there is much more to say about shooting the Striker. The trigger is challenging. Even though the pull weight is only 5 lbs., there is considerable creep and it takes concentration to avoid jerking the trigger. When I began to shoot the gun, groups were more shotgun-like than anything. But with more trigger time things got better. Finally, I was able to shoot three-shot groups of 3/4" at 50 yards. We know from experience with rifles that the cartridge is capable of very good accuracy and there is no reason to believe the Striker isn't also. The limiting factor will not be the gun, but the shooter.

The Striker has a stainless steel barrel with an effective length of 12", plus two more for the brake. As soon as I mentioned I was going to work with the Striker, somebody wanted to know how much velocity would be lost due to the shorter barrel. After I explained to him I wasn't clairvoyant, I promised to find out. Winchester has three factory loads for now and a while back I tested a Model 70 rifle with a 24" barrel. So here it is:

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|-----------------------------|-------|---------|------|
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| 180 gr. Power Point         | 2,995 | 2,558   | 437  |
| 180 gr. Fail Safe           | 2,934 | 2,522   | 412  |

At first the losses may seem large, but a published table shows that, for a cartridge with a velocity of around 3,000 fps, the loss will be 30 fps per inch. That agrees pretty well with what I measured.

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After getting past the initial recoil concerns, the Striker was actually fun to shoot. And it was challenging because shooting it well is not something that comes automatically. For a final exercise, a few shots at an 18" steel plate 300 yards downrange seemed in order. With the crosshairs level with the top of the target hits were not hard to come by. That's pretty flat shooting.

For the serious handgun hunter, no North American game is an unreasonable goal. Heck — with the exception of stuff that will stomp or eat you — you can hunt pretty much anything you want with the Striker. 

For more information, contact Savage Arms Inc., 118 Mountain Rd., Suffield, CT 06078; (800) 235-1821; www.savagearms.com

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## Police Practical Combat (PPC)

See National Rifle Association of America

## Single-Action Shooting Society (SASS)

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92887; (714) 694-1800; [www.sassnet.com](http://www.sassnet.com)

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(661) 269-0635; [www.steelchallenge.com](http://www.steelchallenge.com);  
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See National Rifle Association of America

## Bullseye

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See United States Practical Shooting Ass'n

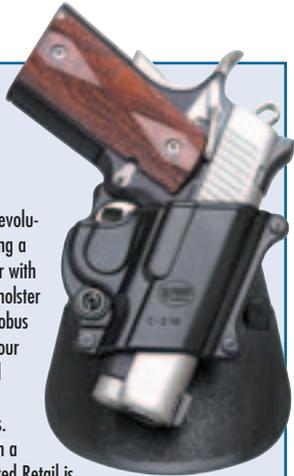
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Munchen, Germany 49-89-5443550;  
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## C21B YAQUI STYLE HOLSTER

Fobus USA

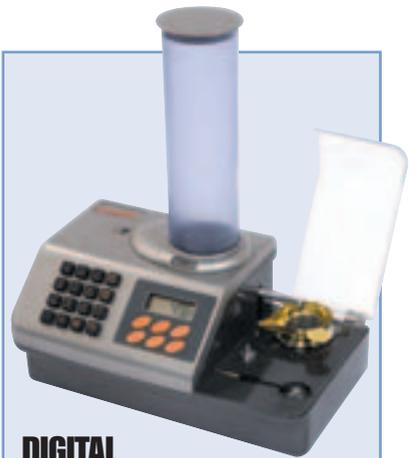
Fobus USA introduces the C21B which revolutionizes their Yaqui style by incorporating a tension screw to allow use of the holster with the Gov't 1911 style frames. This new holster combines a well known style with the Fobus system for a whole new way to carry your handgun. It is impervious to hot or cold conditions and at about 2.0 ounces, it weighs far less than most other holsters. The Fobus USA C21B Holster comes with a lifetime warranty against wear. Suggested Retail is only \$24.99. For more information, visit the web at [www.fobusholster.com](http://www.fobusholster.com)



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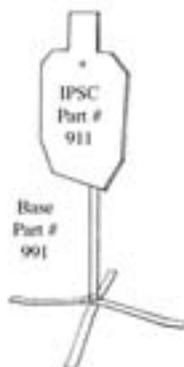


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\$1,000

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\$12,500

Monthly salary for congress.

2,500

Calories allowed per day in Texas Dept. of Crim. Justice prisons, down from 2,700 due to budget cuts. Oh yeah, only one dessert now, not two.

1

Number of beds aboard Air Force One — rank has its privileges.

2

Handguns stolen from actor and peace activist Sean Penn's car while lunching in Berkeley — a loaded Glock and an unloaded S&W .38.

13 MINUTES

Length of standing ovation given to Michael Morre at Cannes Film Festival for *Bowling*.

16 MILLION

Kids introduced to NRA's Eddie Eagle gun safety program since 1988.

1.5

Percentage violent crime rose after the passage of national assault weapon laws.

67

Percentage of Americans who believe excessive lawsuits are causing good companies to go bankrupt.

Continued from page 122

and covered her over gently. He went inside and waited for his family to return. He was surprised there were no tears.

The father met them at the door and the little girl passed him silently, to that far part in the yard they had chosen, to stand, and cry quietly and to remember. And to be alone for a while. His wife looked at him and asked if he was okay. Suddenly, the tears welled-up from his eyes and he shook as she held him closely. They cried together for a long time.

Obligations come in many guises, from simple "take the trash out," to going overseas to protect those who need protecting. They also come in many forms in our daily lives — like Ginger's story. But today, so many are quick to shirk those responsibilities, to leave them for "someone else" to manage. Personal responsibility — and accountability — didn't start with Harry Truman's "The Buck Stops Here" sign on his desk; but that sign, nonetheless, served to warn those around him — it was decision-time. Time to own-up to the chore, regardless of how tough, how scary, how big — or how small.

There are, simply put, some things having to do with family, friends and especially the collective rights of a people, where personal responsibility has to be brought back to life. Doing the hard job is what it takes, and the willingness to accept one's responsibility to those around him needs to come back into fashion. Soon.

And Ginger's story? How do I know it's true? I'm that father.



If you simply have to have one, drop a line to Martin Green, 36 Girton Road, Girton, Cambridge, CB3 0LL, England (e-mail: mg@acc.ndo.co.uk) and he can set you up. If this doesn't stop — or start — conversations, nothing will. Of course, you have to have an understanding wife ...

## Famous Quotes



*"There are no Americans in Baghdad."*  
-Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf

*"I did not have sexual relations with that woman, Ms. Lewinsky."*  
-Bill Clinton

*"The new Isuzu gets 300 miles to the gallon."*  
-Joe Isuzu

## Feds Choose Glock for Pilots

We were able to glean some info on the arming of commercial pilots from an Insider source. The first graduating class from FLETC, on April 19th, 2003 — 44 from a class of 48 pilots who started training — will be armed with Glock Model 22s in .40 S&W with 15-round law enforcement magazines and Trijicon sights. The pilots are officially "Federal Flight Deck Officers." That puts the debate to bed about what to arm pilots with. It seems the decision has been made. Congratulations to Glock.



## S&W Model 500 Honored

Smith & Wesson's massive X-Frame Model 500 revolver was honored as the Handgun of the Year by the Shooting Industry Academy of Excellence. The award, which is voted on by 460 industry executives, dealers and writers, was presented in April during the NRA Show in Orlando, Fla.

The attention-getting handgun in .500 Magnum beat out Kimber's Team Match II

.45 and Springfield's XD 3" Sub-Compact in the final battling.

The Academy of Excellence is sponsored by *American Handgunner*, *GUNS* and our trade publication, *Shooting Industry Magazine*. Twelve awards were presented by the academy. To see if your favorite firearm or company was honored, sign onto: [www.shootingindustry.com](http://www.shootingindustry.com)

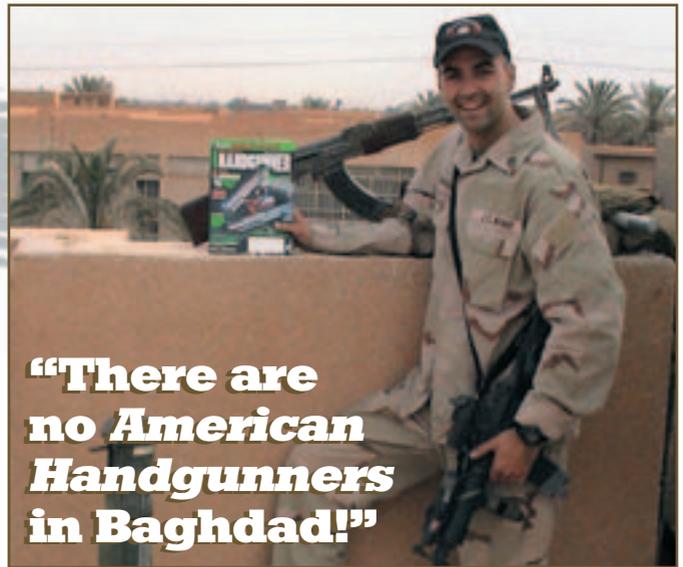
# “Bowling” Facing Recall



**M**ichael Moore’s self-serving, *Bowling For Columbine* bull-filled flick is now the target of an online effort seeking to have his Oscar revoked. Moore’s film is a work of fiction, masquerading as a documentary, with virtually nothing even remotely connected to the facts and obviously written to woo his gun-grabbing effete, elitist, Hollywood peers. But we’re not fooled, and this time, the Emperor has no clothes. Go to [www.revoketheoscar.com](http://www.revoketheoscar.com) to get info on how to contact the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences.

The gist is Moore’s film should never have even been nominated since it *doesn’t qualify as a documentary according to the Academy’s own rules*. Read-up on it and let’s get to work to quash this hysterical distortion of the truths about the NRA and gun owners everywhere.

Have we all forgotten that indeed, Moore has used the tragic deaths of those children for his own profit? How do they dare?



**“There are  
no American  
Handgunners  
in Baghdad!”**

**W**ell, it seems as if that isn’t the case, eh? Courtesy of “Jeff” — 5th Special Forces Group, from, as Jeff said in his note to us, “A rooftop in Baghdad,” we find the real truth. Or, as one pundit commented: “There’s only one weapon of mass destruction in Baghdad ... and it looks like the Army found it.” Way to go guys, and a typical American kick-ass, job-well-done to you!

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Real alligators at the range. Honest.

## Springfield Action Pistol Challenge

**P**art of the fun at the NRA show in Orlando this year, was the Springfield pistol match hosted by Springfield Armory at the Central Florida Rifle & Pistol Club, in the Orlando area. The match pitted shooters of all kinds against the clock, with pistols supplied by Springfield. XD’s and 1911s were in plenty and ammo too, all for the asking with an entry fee. As Dennis Reese, Co-Chairman of the Board for Springfield said, “It’s simply a blast, and the number of first-time shooters who showed-up showed us how the shooting sports are growing, in spite of all the nay-sayers!”

One of the exciting parts of the event was the ability for so many shooters to meet, talk with and even shoot with Robbie Leatham. Watching him mow-down those plates is always astounding and watching him miss is even more astounding!

## NORINCO BITES THE BIG ONE

**S**ince it was formed in 1980, China’s Norinco has had about \$25 billion of import and export business. It seems Norinco sold missiles and other such nasty things to Iran when they weren’t supposed to be doing that. Bad, bad, bad ...

So, the Feds decided to ban all imports from Norinco for two years, which is expected to cost Norinco at least \$100 million. As one official said, “Businesses will complain about it being inconvenient not being able to get inexpensive Norinco products. Well, it’s also inconvenient to have an Iranian missile come down on you.” Bye, bye Norinco “Winchester” Model 97 shotgun clones ...

## THE .07" DIFFERENCE

**I** was fortunate enough to fire the new Glock 37 in April under much “hush-hush” and hiding of guns from on-lookers. We even had to gather *every* empty in case the state secret got out. Made to fire the proprietary .45 Glock round, the 37 is basically a .45 caliber pistol built on the same frame/grip size that normally handles a 9mm/.40. This could be a boon for people with smaller hands who can’t seem to manage a full-sized .45 frame.

Without much time for formal testing, I basically banged-away at some paper and steel plates. It seems as accurate as any other Glock and the plates knocked down smartly when struck. Recoil mirrored a .40 S&W and frankly, if I hadn’t known otherwise, that’s what I would have assumed it was. Velocities are supposed to be in the 1,000 fps for a 185 gr. load and around 985 fps for a 200 gr. load (which is the heaviest bullet available so far.) A larger 230 gr. bullet will simply not fit into the case and still allow effective loads. It’s no .45 ACP, and honestly — I’m not sure what all the fuss is about. But then again, if S&W can do the .500 Maximum, why can’t Glock do the .45 Glock?



.45 ACP on right.



Editor doing the classic gun magazine pose with the Glock 37.





# THE INSIDER

Roy Huntington

## ON RESPONSIBILITY Ginger's Legacy — A True Story

**T**he old dog was slowing as the years crept ahead. Days spent running in the sun, fighting with water sprinklers and playing with the kid were becoming hazy memories. These days, the old gal enjoyed sleeping in that special spot of sunshine by the front door, and padding slowly to greet family as they came and went. Everything seemed to be happening in a hurry around her, and she just couldn't keep up. The dull throb of joint pain and her increasing inability to make sense of the goings-on around her, kept her in one spot more and more.

Ginger's feet twitched, swimming, as she dreamt. She could feel the cool water of the bay, when the little girl used to hold onto her tail and screech in delight as Ginger swam back and forth just off the beach. The tiny tot and Ginger were best friends and spent every waking moment together. Running, chasing, games of tag and retrieving balls by the hour kept them together — and happy. Nights were spent with Ginger on the little girl's bed, sleeping soundly, but with one ear always cocked and ready in case anything was amiss.

The family had noticed how things had changed. At first, slowly, and now, faster and faster, almost daily. In the beginning, Ginger could no longer leap into the back of the truck when the Dad had called to her. As time passed, it got to the point where she could only put her front paws up onto the tailgate and look up, almost embarrassed, as if to say, "Sorry, I don't know quite what's wrong these days. Could you lend a hand?"

And they did. Lend a hand. More and more often. More and more they noticed how the old girl was fading in front of their very eyes. Now, gray-white from the muzzle back, the long amber fur that had caused so many to comment "My, what a beautiful Golden

Retriever she is," was now almost white in many places — in most places. The family wondered how Ginger felt, what she thought about it all, and what they should do. She was old for her breed and the inevitable faced them squarely ahead. They avoided it, regretted it and fought it.

Miss Ginger, as she was often called, usually elected to stay in her warm spot when the family left for the day. But then, one day, an "accident" happened and Ginger found she could not hold it and, in desperation, made it to the tile floor in an effort to do the best she could. Suddenly, there, on the floor, the unspeakable had occurred. Never in her time with the family had this happened, and Ginger could not understand why, or how, or what would happen next when the family came home. She slumped, shivering, into a dark corner and stared at the door.

Once the concern was over, the family got Ginger and petted her and said it was okay, they understood and it would be alright. Ginger looked at them with eyes that said, "I'm so sorry, I honestly don't know how that happened. I just couldn't help it. I don't know what's happening to me. I'm so very sorry."

But then it happened again. And again. The old pooch was increasingly depressed and found herself outside, cut-off from those she loved above all else. Her mind was getting more and more hazy and at times, she couldn't even remember why it was she was outside so often these days.

A family meeting was called and the father brought up what they had all avoided so dreadfully: "I know it's hard to think about, but its time to decide. Ginger is old now, infirm, in pain and past the point she even knows what she's doing. I know we love her, and that's why we have to do this hard thing." They were difficult words, and even tougher to say. It was on his shoulders



Ginger —  
as cowgirl.

to push ahead. His wife and daughter were relying on his strength through this.

Since his daughter was still young, the father explained how they could take Ginger to a vet and she would be given a shot and would die peacefully in the office. "But Daddy," the little girl said. "Ginger doesn't know the vet, and it would be a strange room, and strange people and a cold table. We can't do that. We owe her. Can you do it? Please? That way she's with us."

It was decided. Then. Good-byes were said by the little girl and the mom. Ginger's ears were scratched a final time, hugs and tears given freely. Then, the little girl and Mom went off to buy a new pet, a small animal to live in a cage on the little girl's dresser, to help ease the pain.

The father had prepared a special place in a far corner of their property. He and Ginger spent quiet minutes together and, summoning all of his strength, all of his affection and care for the old dog, he forced himself to do what he knew was the right thing, was his responsibility, was the trust that had been placed upon him by those around him. Ginger was facing away, in the sunshine, enjoying her back being scratched, at peace. The sun felt good on her old bones. She drifted off to sleep, content, knowing she was loved.

There was the sharp crack of a .22.

After carefully wrapping the old dog in her favorite blanket, the one she so often slept in the sun on, the father laid her in the grave. He put her bright blue ball and her leash alongside, said a final farewell,

*Continued on page 120*

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