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The principle components of the Otis System are so well built that they are warrantied for Life! The circular all-caliber patches are made of 100% cotton, and unlike cheap synthetic patches are not dissolved by the bore solvent, turning into plastic gunk left on the rifling. The tight weave of these patches actually pulls metallic copper flake buildup out of the grooves rather than leaving fibers embedded along the bore. The SupraTine brushes

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

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WARNING: Firearms are dangerous and if used improperly may cause serious injury or death. Due to the inherent variables in the reloading of ammunition, be sure to verify any published loads with manufacturer's data. Products mentioned or advertised may not be legal in all states or jurisdictions. Obey all firearms laws. Always consult a professional gunsmith when modifying any firearm. Be a safe shooter!

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AUGUST 2003

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THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED AMMUNITION!

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EXPLOSIVE ENTRY "FANG FACE"
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PENETRATION

EXTRAORDINARY CAPABILITY & A NEW LEVEL OF CONTROL

The reduced over-penetration and reduced ricochet characteristics of these rounds are nothing short of revolutionary. Over-penetration is minimized as the complete energy of the bullet, including the fragmented bullet itself are typically contained within the target. The risk to EMS personnel is reduced because Extreme Shock's don't leave the many glove-shredding, razor sharp fragments of traditional rounds. The ExtremeShock™ AFR round disintegrates when it hits hard targets such as many interior walls and airplane skins, but retains astonishing stopping power on organic targets. Its capability for inside-the-aircraft antiterrorism operations is legendary within the special operations community.

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OF EAGLES...
AND THE GATES OF
HELL SHALL NOT
PREVAIL
AGAINST
YOU!**



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In addition to Law Enforcement Only rounds, The ExtremeShock™ Explosive Entry Air Freedom Round Personal Defense ammunition is the best choice for home or urban carry. The rounds frangible and reduced ricochet characteristics provide a greater level of safety. A miss on a target wont penetrate through several walls, and potentially injure a sleeping family member. The pistol rounds comply with appropriate DOJ pistol caliber ballistic vest requirements, but are devastatingly effective against armed assailants. An officer can shoot a rabid dog on a playground with less worry that the bullet will penetrate, hit the ground, ricochet and injure or kill a bystander.



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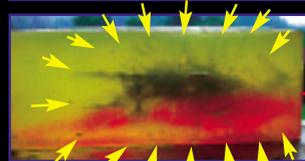


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The Extreme Shock Explosive Entry round is the world's first "smart" small arms munition. It fragments in logarithmic proportion to the hardness of the target it strikes. It more than doubles the rate of energy transfer of a typical hollow point round! It more than quadruples the rate of energy transfer of conventional ball rounds. If it is striking something brittle, it's Nytrilium-Tungsten core will disintegrate very rapidly, reducing shoot-through and ricochet.



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



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

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The E-Shocks pistol caliber rounds entire energy is transferred in the first 5-9 inches of entry, effectively logamarithmically delivering the full energy at twice the rate of the best hollow points. Compare it to having a karate expert pushing you with both hands or give you a bone-shattering punch to the face. While both may exert the same amount of total energy measured in foot-pounds, the rapid transfer of the punch is far more devastating. Where a conventional round leaves a one-hole trauma cavity, The Extreme Shock Explosive Entry Round leaves a "shaped charge" trauma cavity with hundreds of individual wounds channels, causing Central Nervous System catastrophic overload. In video taped field tests with angry 300 lb Russian Boars, a single .380 round will incapacitate and kill in a matter of seconds! The 450lb Boar in the picture was taken with a single 9mm round. See our website or call for more information!



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JULY 2003

CROSSFIRE LETTERS TO GUNS

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Thanks J.T.

John Taffin's article, "Perfect Packin' .480" was most enjoyable. The monumental amount of work that went into exploring all the load data presented is greatly appreciated by this fan of the .480 Ruger.

When I read about the introduction of the .480 Ruger, I knew I couldn't live without one. As luck would have it, my local dealer had just received a 7/8-inch Super Redhawk, which followed me home along with a new pistol scope.

The combination proved so consistent and accurate I just had to have a single action chambered for it. My choice was to have gunsmith Gary Reeder convert an old Ruger Blackhawk to one of his five-shot, "Ultimate .480s." Now I'm in hog heaven, with two fine revolvers to fire what is now my favorite handgun cartridge.

John Kenney
Redwood City, Calif.

Sticky Fingers

My thanks to GUNS Magazine. Your magazine really gave me something to look forward to as I was part of operation "Enduring Freedom" on the USS Bonhomme Richard. I was an Aircraft Electrician with the 13 MEU attached to ship 620 in support of the Air Element.

Many a magazine disappeared right underneath my nose or simply didn't make it to me. I suspect sticky fingers were responsible for the ones that didn't arrive. However, the popularity of your magazine aboard ship made it one of the most borrowed and bartered items.

For the AR-180B, I've been looking for a good, affordable, reliable rifle that won't have the self fouling problem that plagues the M-16 and which has given me many hours in Arizona heat to clean off. I wonder, is there is a civilian version of the G-36? I hope the refinement of this rifle goes well, though I would like to see the quick adjusting rear elevation knob found on the M16A2. Then again, the MIL-STD-1913 would make it almost unnecessary.

Steven M. Tomaszewski
River Rouge, Mich.

It Takes A Man...

Please disregard everything I said in my letter regarding the article about the AR-

180B! It really makes me sound like a first-class moron!

But, in my defense, I got a heck of a lot of bad info from several other publications.

Upon telling my Uncle, who is very well-informed on the subject of firearms and who owns a Howa-produced AR-180, about the article and the letter I wrote, he was very abrupt (and quite informative) about the facts regarding the AR-180 and its origin. Author Cutshaw was dead-on about every aspect of this weapon! His article was factual in every respect. He also gave me a brief history of the AR-16 (The one I claimed was "nonexistent").

My Apologies to Mr. Cutshaw! From now on, I'll keep my big mouth shut, and my letter writing to a minimum, until I have all of the facts!

I would however, like to see a piece on the late, great Eugene Stoner. I still believe he was truly a gun designer who was far ahead of his time and that too little is said or known about him and what he contributed to modern firearms design. I think it would be a shame if his legacy faded into a distant memory.

Brian Davlin
Via e-mail

Great Customer Service

I recently had an unforgettable experience with one of our largest service knife manufacturers, KA-BAR.

After more than 7 years of service, hard use and perhaps some abuse, the leather scabbard on my KA-BAR model 1221 knife literally fell apart. I contacted KA-BAR to find the availability of a new scabbard and was informed by the customer service representative, Carole Deckman, that a new Kydex sheath would be sent by KA-BAR at no cost to me. Great service! A person couldn't ask for more from any company.

The Kydex sheath arrived in about two weeks. On examination, I discovered the sheath had a defective retention snap. I again contacted KA-BAR and asked for some help in having the defective snap replaced. The same service representative informed me that a second new Kydex sheath would be provided by KA-BAR — again, no charge.

It is a pleasure to find companies that still think of customers as valuable friends, and KA-BAR has a friend, and customer for life.

Dennis Platt
Sandy, Utah

Please Keep It Up

I must admit that I like the 1911 pistol. I own a couple of the finest, customized by the likes of King and Richard Heinie. But, if you would be so kind, keep placing the emphasis on auto pistols so that people will sell their old 'Smiths and Colts cheap — so I can buy and enjoy many of them!

I find myself enjoying and understanding John Taffin's wheelgun articles more all the time.

Jim Davidson
Lincoln, Ill.

More Wish Lists

I enjoyed reading the wish list in your May issue as well as the articles through out your magazine. I've been a reader for about a year, and have been interested by the reviews of revolvers using auto calibers and moon clips.

All the reviews I've seen were for the .40 S&W/10mm and .45 ACP. Is there any interest by the gun manufacturers to develop a revolver to use the economical and controllable 9mm with moon clips? I'm a small-handed guy so my desire would be one on a medium or small frame and conforming to IDPA standards. This would be a tempting design to lure me from my semiautos.

I don't own Smith & Wessons but believe it is time to put the whole Clinton/S&W business behind us (firearm users). That said, I could kill two birds with one stone (my first revolver and S&W firearm) if S&W would manufacture one.

Todd Campbell
Erin, Tenn.

Ready To Write The Check

I would like Ruger to make a GP-100 in .45 ACP with moon clips, and a semiauto carbine in .45 ACP using P-90/97 magazines. How about a P-94 sized .45?

I would also like to see High Point make a .45 ACP carbine in the same format as the 9mm model. Further, I'd like to see the 9mm model changed so that it would accept the magazines of other manufacturers.

How soon may I expect delivery?

Eddie McLean
Via e-mail



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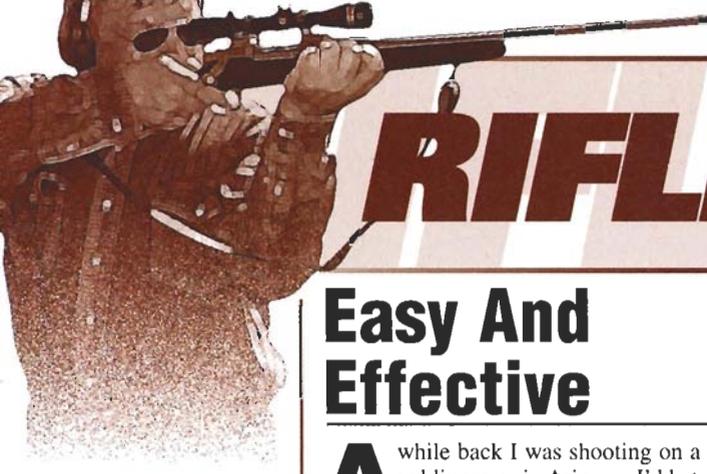
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RIFLEMAN BY DAVE ANDERSON

Easy And Effective

A while back I was shooting on a big, very busy public range in Arizona. I'd bet more time was being spent cleaning rifles than shooting them. Accuracy fanatics have done a terrific job promoting the virtues of bore cleaning.

Some shooters were conditioning bores, firing a shot or two followed by twenty minutes of scrubbing; others actually fired three or four groups before pulling out the cleaning gear. These days it's more profitable to manufacture cleaning patches than ammunition.

Bore cleaning is important, but it's also, well, boring. Anything that makes the job easier and faster catches my interest. Recently I've been using the Iosso® bore cleaning system. The procedure recommended by Iosso is to start with their gun oil and run a few wet patches through the bore to help loosen fouling.

The actual Iosso bore cleaner is a thick paste. Squeeze a dab (a little goes a long way) on a nylon brush and make a few passes through the bore, then follow with clean patches. Depending on how badly the bore is fouled the paste/patches procedure may have to be repeated.

I was surprised and pleased to see how quickly the patches came out clean. The company recommends you finish up with a couple more patches wet with Iosso gun oil to remove any remaining cleaning residue and protect the bore against corrosion.

Not only is it fast, the bore paste removes all types of fouling — powder, copper, moly, even surface rust. It won't damage wood stocks or blued metal. Unlike liquid solvents, the paste doesn't drip on the floor or into the rifle's action, and it doesn't give off potentially harmful vapors. And it really gets the bore clean.

Not Just For Warfighters

No doubt you've seen the cool SureFire ads for flashlights and weapons-mounted lighting systems. Special Forces personnel use SureFire lights with infrared filters and night vision goggles in the dangerous work of clearing caves and bunkers and in nighttime urban fighting.

We hunters and campers also need a quality light, even if our purpose is only to keep from tripping on the tent ropes when answering a midnight call of nature. SureFire has a light for us as well. Called the Outdoorsman, the new light is part of the E2



Executive series. Compact and light, it is just 4.5 inches long and weighs 3.2 ounces.

Hunters and campers are often a long way from the nearest store, so battery life is especially important. Where other flashlights in the E2 series use a 60-lumen lamp which runs for 75 minutes on a pair of batteries, the Outdoorsman uses a 25-lumen lamp (brighter than a standard 2 D-cell flashlight) with a run time of 150 minutes.

The long pocket clip of the Outdoorsman provides good security and has an integral loop to accept an optional lanyard, a handy feature in deep snow or over water. Otherwise it has all the proven SureFire features; high-grade aluminum construction, hard anodized to resist corrosion, with rubber seals to keep out moisture.

The tail cap can be rotated for constant on, or depressed for flashing on and off — a nice feature if you ever have to signal your buddies, or (heaven forbid!) send an SOS to a search plane. A waterproof carrier for a spare battery and bulb is available. The Outdoorsman accepts E2 accessories such as the KL1 LED lamp, and red and blue filters.

SureFire suggests the red filter is useful for traveling to a stand in the dark without alarming game, while the blue filter shows up a blood trail if wounded game is being followed after dark. In my part of the world game wardens take a dim view of people with bright lights and firearms moving about the woods at night. If you do so be very sure it is legal.

The Outdoorsman runs on two 3-volt lithium batteries. It's not uncommon to see these batteries selling for \$6 and more. Apparently there is a substantial profit margin in these sales.

SureFire was concerned the price of batteries was causing people to hesitate about buying their flashlights. They found by placing a very large order a top quality lithium battery could be made for a fraction of the cost. The SureFire SF123 3-volt battery currently retails at \$15 for a pack of 12, just \$1.25 per battery. The Outdoorsman flashlight is \$95.



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QUARTERMASTER

BY DAVID M. FORTIER

Warne Scope Rings

I became acquainted with Warne scope rings years ago when I had my first custom rifle built. While I was less than impressed with how that particular rifle turned out, I did like the steel Warne rings. They were attractive, well made, and rugged. This latter point was especially important to me. Stop and consider, your rings are what attaches your sighting system to your rifle. It just doesn't make sense to top an accurate rifle with a quality piece of glass using bargain basement rings.

Now, years later, I still use and highly recommend Warne rings. Their recently introduced Maxima series follows in the Warne tradition of being both rugged and good looking. Available for 1-inch and 30mm tubes, they are offered in three heights, low, medium and high. They are also available in three finishes, regular blue, matte blue and silver (nickel plated). The 1-inch rings are also available in stainless steel.

Maxima rings are available in two styles, quick detachable and permanently attached. The QD rings feature a lever lock system that allows the rings to be easily removed or attached. This system is the same as that used on Warne's Premier series of rings, and is guaranteed to return to zero. The permanently attached rings lock the scope to the rifle via four high-tensile socket head cap screws. These rings are simple yet rugged. I've used them successfully on heavy recoiling guns like .50 BMGs with no problems.

One nice feature of the Warne rings is that they're offered for



such rifles as Sakos, Tikkas, CZs and BRNOs that can otherwise be difficult to find quality rings for. If you're looking for good looking and nicely made rings and bases you might want to consider Warne.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Warne Manufacturing Company
[800] 683-5590
www.warnescopemounts.com

Engine Chassis



Scope not included.



Scope mounts included.

QUARTERMASTER

BY DAVID M. FORTIER

KUSA WER-Suit

Recently I came across an interesting evolution of the ghillie suit. Called the WER-Suit (Wer is Old English for man just as Ghillie is Gaelic for man), it's a substantial change from the traditional ghillie in both concept and fabrication. Instead of being a garment that you wear, the WER-Suit is a modular unit worn as a backpack or attached piggyback to an operator's pack.

The unit itself consists of a rectangular base piece worn on the back via padded shoulder straps. This features a pouch for a Camelback hydration unit and nylon ALICE style webbing attaching points for pouches and extra gear. The heart of the system though is a modified ghillie contained in a roll on the back of the unit. This consists of nylon mesh netting to which burlap strips and/or local vegetation may be easily attached. Included is an integral belt, skid-plate chest covering, face/rifle scope veil and elbow/knee pads.

To deploy, one simply unbuckles two straps which allows the unit to unroll. You

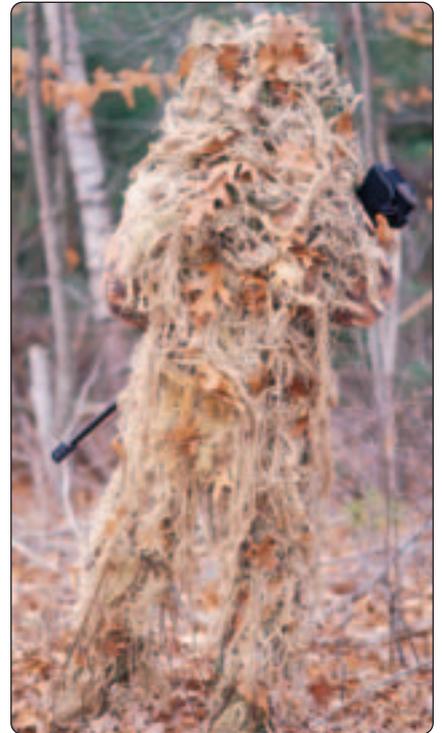
then pull the skid-plate chest covering over your head, fasten the waist belt and attach the skid plate to it, and then fasten the netting to your legs. It takes less than one minute to deploy and provides full coverage in the prone position.

After using it I can say it's a simple, squared away unit that allows an operator to have a rolled up ghillie, hydration unit, Eagle Industries Recon buttpack and other gear all in one convenient self-contained package. It's well thought out, lightweight, and provides effective concealment. Price? A base unit, without camouflage, retails for \$297. A camouflage kit to complete it retails for \$282. A ready to go WER-Suit retails for approximately \$1000.



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QUARTERMASTER

BY DAVID M. FORTIER

Quality Cartridge

Know where I can find a French Mle 1873 revolver? I've been looking for one of those rascals for some time now to add to my collection. Sooner or later I'll find one, and when I do I'm sure I'll be tempted to shoot it. Where will I find such an odd ball cartridge as 11mm French Revolver in shooting quantities you ask? That my friend is the easy part, a simple call to Quality Cartridge will bring it to my door.

Have a rifle or handgun you can't find ammunition for? Want a supply of cases with your own headstamp? Don't have time to reload for your favorite smokepole? No problem, Quality Cartridge can supply custom ammunition to fit almost any need. Recently I had them supply me with 8mm French Revolver, 7.92x57 JS Match, .380/200 Webley & Scott, and 7.5 MAS Match. The ammunition they shipped was attractive and gave consistent and reliable results. I was especially impressed with the Match ammunition they loaded to my specifications.

However these four European calibers do not begin to illustrate the vast assortment of calibers Quality Cartridge loads on a regular basis. Obsolete American rifle and handgun cartridges? European big game cartridges designed for India's and Africa's largest? Obscure metric cartridges long departed? Little known wildcats? Quality Cartridge probably has it on the shelf!

Have an idea for a round no one has thought of but don't know how to bring it to fruition? Quality Cartridge will even do the R&D

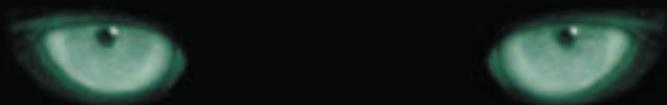


work producing a cartridge to your specifications, for a price. While their ammunition is not cheap it's reasonably priced for what you get. This is especially true as much of what they offer is unobtainable anywhere else.



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Continuing The Legacy

Two True Treasures

Books are one of life's great joys, and it's no less true for the shooter. Good books allow you to watch over the gunsmith's shoulder, sit by the campfire and hear great hunting tales, or benefit from a lifetime of handloading experience.

After all, we can't spend everyday at the range, in the game fields or even at the reloading bench, but with the aid of a good book, a few spare minutes is plenty of time to pursue your particular shooting passion. My personal library has hundreds of volumes, collected over the last 30 years or so. All have been enjoyable, and many are so entertaining or informative I go back and re-read them regularly.

Two recently published books stand out as being exceptionally worthwhile and nicely done. The first is Hamilton Bowen's *The Custom Revolver*. The second is *Shooting Buffalo Rifles Of The Old West*, by Mike Venturino.

Custom Revolvers

Bowen's book, like the fabulous custom built revolvers he is so famous for, is pure class from the first page to the last. If you like revolvers, custom guns or simply the pursuit of excellence for its own sake, you must add this to your bookshelf.

The book is a user's guide to the merits and details of building a fine custom revolver. It doesn't simply show off the magnificent custom creations of the author, but rather seeks to inform the reader about the many choices available in base guns to commence with, and the almost limitless variety of treatments for sights, stocks, custom chamberings, barrel and topstrap contours, surface finishes, etc.

Chapters include: The Keith No. 5, Raw Material, Basic Mechanical Detailing, Cylinders and Caliber Conversions, Style, Finishing, Grips, and Off The Beaten Path; with an additional section devoted to commercial and wildcat revolver cartridges and their respective merits.

If you are an admirer of Elmer Keith's writing, the very first chapter alone is worth the price of admission. In it Bowen describes the detailed recreation of Keith's famous No. 5 Colt SAA — his "last word" in custom revolvers. This would be an impressive performance if you had the original to duplicate. However, Bowen had access only to a small number of snapshots and Keith's original 1929 article. The end result is not only beautiful, it's a lasting testimony to an artisan who is willing to do a project correctly or not at all.

The Custom Revolver is positively full of great information you'll not find elsewhere, as well as being splendidly illustrated with crisp photography and stunning color plates. However it's also very attractively written. I suppose it's hardly surprising that someone who shapes steel with such grace shapes his text with equal care.

Order *The Custom Revolver* directly from Hamilton Bowen at Bowen Classic Arms, PO Box 67, Louisville, Tenn. 37777, or via the Web: www.bowen-classicarms.com. Cost is \$39.95 plus shipping.

Buffalo Guns

Old friend Mike Venturino is certainly one of the most knowledgeable shooters and handloaders I've ever encountered. He can speak knowingly on any shooting-related topic, but it's no secret his chief interest lies with the guns of the frontier, especially the Sharps rifles of the hide-hunting era.

Venturino is my kind of antique gun buff. Rather than buying a fine old rifle and locking it in a glass case never to be fired again, he takes that rifle out to the range and puts it to work. Countless hours learning the intricacies of loading these guns in the original fashion has made Venturino the nation's foremost authority on the subject. I honestly believe these fine old guns speak to him — and good man that he is — Mike is willing to let us in on what they have to say.

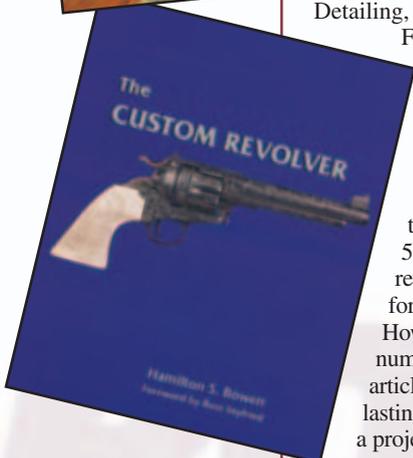
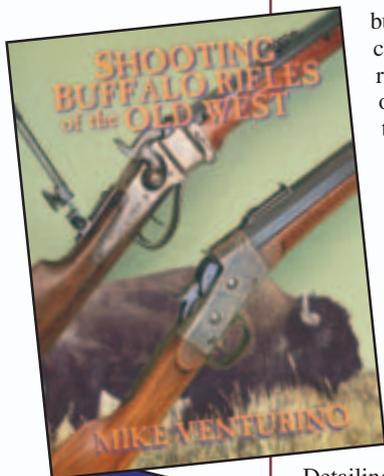
His most recent book is *Shooting Buffalo Rifles Of The Old West* and it's a must-have volume if you have even the slightest interest in western history and the Sharps, Remington, Ballard, Springfield and other rifles of the period.

In the course of 286 pages we're first introduced to the original rifles commonly used by the buffalo hunters of old. Their strengths, weaknesses and significant variations are explained in an easy to read fashion. Modern replicas of these guns are discussed next, and the fact that all of these guns are produced today speaks volumes about the attraction this period of history holds.

With this out of the way, Venturino gets to the amazing variety of cartridges these rifles were most commonly chambered for, and how to make them perform properly today. Not only are hunting-grade loads profiled, but also the techniques for building match-winning ammo for the various forms of old time rifle matches currently popular.

The book rounds out with reprints of several of Venturino's most popular *Shooting Times* articles on the bison hunting period. This is simply a great book, and if you're interested in shooting black powder cartridge rifles, the information contained here will shave years off your learning curve. Even if you're only interested in learning more about this short-lived era of our nation's history, this book is a great read.

Shooting Buffalo Rifles Of The Old West may be ordered directly from MLV Enterprises, PO Box 914, Livingston, Mont. 59047. Or, you may order via the Web: www.ycsi.net/users/mlventurino. The cost is \$30 plus shipping.



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Compact



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Sub-Compact



PERFECTION

Use Enough Gun?

Without the question mark, *Use Enough Gun* is a famous book of African hunting lore by Robert Ruark. What does this mean to us?

Over the last 10 years, I have guided people hunting in different places for different kinds of animals. Here in Texas they often use the time-tested “go to food and water” elevated hunting stand technique. Often berated by non-Texans, I personally find some value in it.

I can provide new first-time hunters with a stable firing platform that hides all of their buck fever and fidgeting. Often these hunting neophytes bring some really big guns. I mean *really big* considering that an average Texas whitetail weighs maybe 150 pounds.

We are talking big rifles like a .30-338 with a 20x scope and a muzzle brake that looks like something from a German Tiger tank. So first things first, we go to the 100-yard line at the range and they show me their idea of a zero. After we have a zero we agree on, it's “a hunting we will go.”

Below: Hunters seem to seek more power every year, but a 3.5-inch rocket launcher may be a bit much. (right) Heidi with eland and Wanda with bison prove some animals take more convincing than others.

Well one thing I know for sure — at 100 yards give or take some and even armed with a .30-338 topped with a 20x scope, if you yank on the trigger you often miss. And just because you hit the deer somewhere between his white tail and his black nose doesn't mean the deer is done running. Another point of interest is the one rifle on the ranch I let non-rifle people use is a Ruger M77 extra lightweight. This rifle with a simple 4x scope and chambered in .308 Winchester has taken more deer than any other 10 rifles brought here combined.

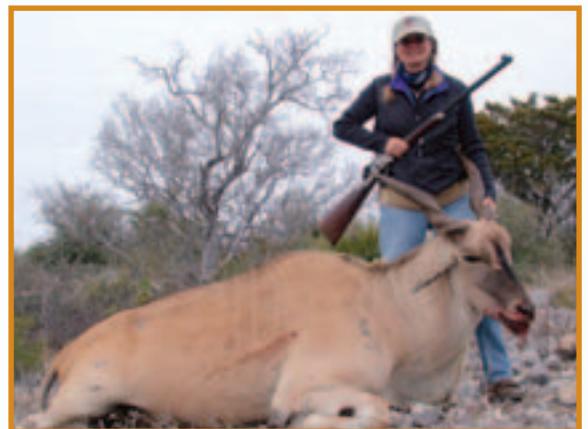
So here's a thought, maybe a rifle I can hit with is “enough gun?”

“Missy, I Don't Know About That Gun”

Early this year Ms. Heidi, my treasured hunting wife was given a Christmas present of a guided hunt for Eland on the famous Indianhead Ranch in Del Rio, Texas. In preparation, good hunter that she is, Heidi faithfully wrung out her Shiloh Sharps .45-70 charged with 65 grains of Goex Cartridge powder.

As we talked to folks in passing she gleefully told them of her upcoming exploit. Many a long face appeared before our eyes. Seems few of the experienced African hunting types thought much of Heidi shooting her blackpowder rifle. “Well Heidi you know those African antelope are really tough to stop.” “I don't know Heidi those Eland are big and surly; better be careful!”

continued on page 92





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2 3/4" Overall 7 1/8" blade
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SS463K Washita Kit27.95

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SS458 Sioux Blade only17.50
SS458K Complete Kit25.95

CHEYENNE HUNTER

9 1/8" overall with 4 1/2" blade
SS495 Cheyenne Blade only18.75
SS495K Complete Kit27.00

KAW SKINNER

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Etch your blades with the easy to use Personalizer Plus etching machine. Type name or draw a personal design on the special stencil material provided, then follow the easy to use instructions for professional results in seconds. Complete Kit contains everything you need to etch stainless, carbon steel and more.

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440-C Stainless blades are about 10 1/4" overall, blades are 5 1/2". Kits supplied with blade, brass guard, threaded pommel and block of Dymondwood handle material.

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The Texas Bowie Blade, (12 1/2" overall, 7" x 1 1/2" x 3/16" thick blade), brass guard and pommel and a pre-drilled dymondwood block for the handle.

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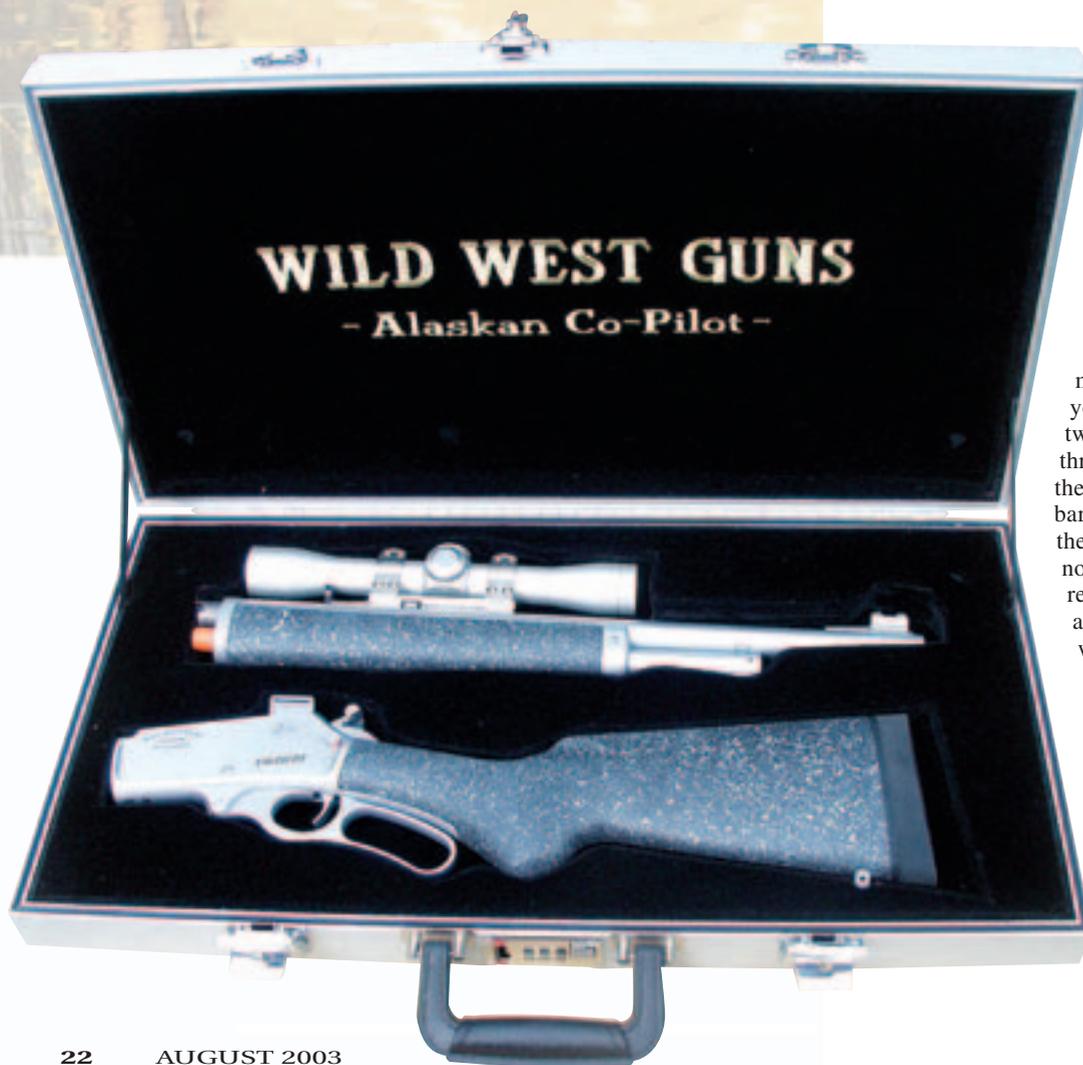
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THE SECOND BEST CO-PILOT

BY DICK WILLIAMS



In Alaska, there's a gun shop by the name of Wild West Guns. One might expect it to have the word "north" in its name, but since the owner is named Jim West and he is fascinated with a type of rifle associated with the wild west, and since Alaska is west of the continental U.S., we'll let this one go.

Specifically, West works his magic on Marlin lever actions, turning out some beautiful custom guns that are remarkably well suited for use in Alaska's special, but harsh environments. Perhaps his most popular offering is his "Co-Pilot."

Designed For Close Confines

One look at the rifle lets you know you're dealing with the Marlin heritage, but it's difficult to determine what feature you really notice first. If the gun is in two pieces, it's the takedown capability that initially grabs you, but only if the gun is disassembled. By that I mean the takedown is so nicely executed you might not otherwise spot it at first.

The gun separates in front of the receiver, just behind the forearm, and features a fully threaded barrel. Final fit of barrel to receiver is excellent although the joining line is noticeable. There is a large knurled screw at the front of the magazine tube that goes through the magazine and into a stud mounted on the bottom of the barrel.

To disassemble the rifle, unscrew this until it is free and slide the magazine tube forward. Then drop the lever so the bolt is retracted to the rear of the receiver. Since you probably elevated the muzzle while lowering the lever, again pull the magazine tube forward before starting to unscrew the barrel from the receiver.

You probably have the mechanical skills that would allow you to reduce these three steps to two. For me, it was always at least three steps since I frequently raised the muzzle while unscrewing the barrel and repeatedly had to slide the magazine tube forward so it did not interfere with the receiver. To reassemble the rifle, reverse the above steps. And no, I'm not walking you through that.

Wealth Of Sighting Options

It's only after you tire of playing with this neat takedown system that you begin to notice the other custom features. Probably the second thing I noticed was the Scout scope system with the detachable Warne rings that allow quick removal of the scope, leaving the previously dialed-in iron

Facing page: Taken down, the Guide Gun makes a truly tidy package. **Right:** The .50 Alaskan, .45-70 and .457 Magnum offer plenty of wallop for stopping the biggest game in the thickest cover.

sights visible. It also allows you to re-install the scope and know that it will still shoot within an inch of your previous setting. The scope on the test gun was a 2.5x Leupold IER with the thick, three sided, open center cross hairs. It was a perfect mate for this rifle.

A low profile scope base mounted over the factory rear sight secures the rings and still allows you to see the iron sights when the scope is removed. The front sight is a red, fiber optic bead that gives that extra degree of visibility needed during the dim lighting conditions that accompany much of Alaska's hunting season. At the rear of the rifle's action is a custom ghost ring sight made by Wild West Guns. Aperture on the test gun's ghost ring was large and functional. Wild West's literature mentions a threaded aperture being available, but I couldn't see any threads in this sight.

Next to the front sight base is Wild West's porting system, three holes on each side. The sight base has a slot on each side that "secures" the open topped hood which allows in more light than an enclosed hood. This is a good idea as the fiber optic sight is easier to see if exposed to more light.

I put quotes around the word "secures" because the hood came off the rifle while I was shooting it at the range to be lost forever. I did not remember a hood being on the gun until I reviewed the pictures taken before going to the range. The skeletal hood does provide some protection from bumps, but its absence is not detrimental to performance.

At the rear of the rifle stock is the other half of the Co-Pilots' recoil reduction system, a Pachmayr Decelerator™



WILD WEST CO-PILOT

Load	Velocity	Average Group
<i>.457 Magnum 350 gr. JSP</i>	2,085	1½"
<i>Corbon 350 gr.</i>	1,798	1¼"
<i>Corbon 405 gr.</i>	1,580	1⅛"
<i>Buffalo Bore 350 gr. JFN</i>	1,945	1¼"
<i>Buffalo Bore 430 gr. LFN</i>	1,897	2¼"
<i>Buffalo Bore 500 gr. FMJ</i>	1,393	5/8"
<i>Win. 300 gr. JHP</i>	1,685	2"
<i>Win. 300 gr. Partition Gold</i>	1,660	1½"
<i>Fed 300 gr. JHP</i>	1,580	1"
<i>Rem. 300 gr. JHP</i>	1,525	4½"
<i>Black Hills 405 gr. Cowboy</i>	1,163	6"

pad. Between the porting system and Pachmayr pad, the 6.5-pound gun's substantial recoil is made quite manageable. Instead of a punch, you experience a quick, heavy push. The end result is kinder than shooting comparable ammo through my much heavier 1886 Winchester with its crescent shaped steel butt plate.

The stock and forearm on the test gun are both made of speckled charcoal colored kevlar, a great choice for Alaska's usually wet environment. Equally appropriate for Alaska is the brushed chrome finish on all metal parts. Sling studs are mounted near the base of the stock in front of the Pachmayr pad and through the metal band at the front of the forearm. Finally, there is a hammer extension mounted atop the Marlin's hammer that provides about an inch of additional width for the thumb to cock or uncock the gun. The cross bolt safety is a Marlin factory installation.

A "More Power" .45-70

West offers barrels in lengths of 16.5, 18, or 20 inches. Internally the barrel is modified to chamber Wild West's proprietary .457 Magnum, a custom case about one tenth of an inch longer than the common .45-70. This chamber will accept .45-70 ammunition, but guns chambered for .45-70 ammo will not (or should not), be capable of chambering .457 Magnum ammunition. The .457 is loaded with 350-grain bonded core bullets rated at 2,200 fps.

I got slightly less in the 18-inch barrel, but the power level is still impressive and a non-ported 20-inch barrel would probably get you right up to the 2,200 fps number. For those who prefer, or for general



shooting, the Co-Pilot also fires .45-70 ammo, including the high power rounds from Corbon and Buffalo Bore. If you've been firing .45-70 cartridges, it's wise to scrub out the Co-Pilot's chamber before changing to the longer .457 Magnum.

Custom Components Too

The action has been tuned to improve reliability including the installation of some custom parts manufactured by Wild West Guns. West has seen problems with the original Marlin ejector, and thus offers his "bear proof" replacement part. Unlike the Marlin component, which uses a separate, staked-in-place spring, the bear proof ejector and spring are made as a unit.

Also incorporated into the Co-Pilot is the "trigger happy" kit. This unit replaces the stock Marlin trigger group and not only provides a lighter pull weight, but being spring loaded, eliminates the annoying "flop" that characterizes the stock Marlin trigger. The trigger on the sample Co-Pilot broke at a crisp 3 pounds.

If you like, West will install his heavy-duty enlarged loop lever, which might be quite handy when operating the rifle while wearing heavy gloves in Alaska's cold weather.

A Preference For Heavy Loads

As the table shows, the rifle shoots very well. Targets were nine-inch diameter, plain white paper plates with no bullseyes or other marking. All groups tested were with the Leupold scope installed, and the recoil was quite manageable, even over sandbags on the shooting bench. I shot at 50 yards because I was thinking of the Co-Pilot as a short-range hunting rifle, perhaps even primarily as a defensive weapon. This was a mistake because the little gun is capable of some pretty precise shooting and should work well at considerably longer ranges.

This Marlin may have started out as a .45-70, but this is not your granddaddy's trapdoor Springfield! The performance of the .457 Magnum was very impressive, but frankly so was that of the specialty .45-70 loads from Buffalo Bore and Corbon. In fact, the little lever gun did not care for mild loads, printing the tightest groups with the hot stuff.

The .457 Magnum cartridge and the more powerful .45-70 loads with velocities approaching 2,000 fps or more would certainly facilitate taking game out to 150 yards. Perhaps a bit farther, at least with the scope. Which brings me to one of two niggling little things that initially bothered me about the rifle.

When the scope was removed, the iron sight picture got pretty busy. The buckhorn rear sight blocked over half the ghost ring's field of view, which kind of defeats the purpose of a ghost ring. All three iron sights (front bead, buckhorn rear and ghost ring,) were pretty much in line, but there was just too much hardware in the sight picture.

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Enter The "Duh" Factor

In fairness, the inclusion of all three sights would probably not slow you down enough to pose a threat if a potentially life threatening encounter occurred where rapid target and sight acquisition and alignment were crucial. But the sight picture would be a little overpowering when trying for a bit of precision shooting. As it happens, the correction was very simple and a bit embarrassing.

After initially muttering over the interference of the buckhorn sight with use of the ghost ring, I noticed the barrel mounted rear sight folds neatly out of the way with the touch of a finger. Duh! It's time to admit I need to wear glasses anytime I examine things at less than arm's length.

If you like, Wild West Guns will remove the buckhorn rear sight and install a slot blank. However, having both types of iron sights on the gun and simply folding the buckhorn sight out of the way until needed is the best solution, since you now have a back-up rear sight in the event you damage the ghost ring. In the back-country, a little extra insurance never hurts.

The hammer spur extension bothered me a bit simply because I'm getting set in my ways. I've always preferred a plain, skinny hammer on a lever gun unless hammer accessibility is hampered by a low mounted scope. This is not a problem on the Co-Pilot with the scout system located well forward over the barrel. However, I will concede that the need to wear gloves in Alaska during much of the hunting season probably makes the hammer extension a good idea.

Perhaps if I lived full time in Alaska I would be as smart as the guys who do live there and have learned to cope with the weather. Alas, I have become spoiled and decadent and living in the mild southern California climate.

Easy Transport

The Co-Pilot comes with a soft, double section carrying case that measures 21x9x2 inches. It's perfect for fitting into the cramped quarters of the typical Alaskan bush plane, but you'll need a hard case for travel elsewhere in the U.S. West offers a beautiful, lockable hard case. The hard case may just be too pretty, thus tempting thieves who don't even know there's a rifle inside.

As the title of the book suggests, God is the first choice for a co-pilot when one is flying in remote country including Alaska's bush, but the second choice is probably West's heavily customized Marlin Co-Pilot tucked under the seat. It won't help you fly the plane, but it would be most appreciated if you go down in bush country. And it will absolutely deal with any and all residents who take umbrage at your presence in their parlor.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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Handguns Of The Generals

Why Patton Carried Two Guns

We know that George S. Patton, the most pugnacious and perhaps the most famous American general officer who actually took the field in World War II, carried two handguns as his trademark. At first, they were twin Colt Single Action Army .45 revolvers. After he gave one of that brace of sixguns to a Hollywood star he admired and appreciated having the courage to entertain his boys at The Front, he backed up the remaining Peacemaker with a 3½-inch barreled Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum.

Many thought the pair of ivory-handled revolvers conspicuously strapped to his waist connoted merely showmanship. Certainly, there was some of that. Patton knew the importance of inspiring his troops, and if it took flamboyance to make an inspiring impression then, by all the gods of war, he would be flamboyant.

But, it turns out, there was more than that. Stanley P. Hirshon's biography *General Patton*, published in 2002 by Harper Collins, contains Patton's explanation to his friend, General Kenyon A. Joyce, of exactly why he carried two handguns instead of just one. It is well known to those who've studied Patton's life that when he was a young man, he was part of General Pershing's "Punitive Expedition" to Mexico hunting Pancho Villa.

First Blood

On May 14, 1914, Patton came under fire for the first time in his life. He had led a caravan of three automobiles to buy food for the troops when he came upon a band of Villistas. As the latter attempted to flee on horseback, a gunfight took

place between the Americans and the Mexicans. Patton was armed with his privately owned Colt SAA .45 revolver, carried in the usual fashion with the hammer down on an empty chamber. In the course of the encounter, he emptied the weapon.

He would later say in a letter to his father, "I fired back five times with my new pistol and one of them ducked back into the house. I found out later that this was Cardenes and that I had hit both he and his horse."

That encounter occurred at approximately 20 yards. Another opponent came much closer on horseback, about 10 paces, and Patton deliberately shot the horse. Animal and rider went down, and when the latter stood back up, a volley from other American soldiers cut him down.

George Patton had drawn his first blood, but in the course of the firefight he had also found out what it was

like to be shot at and have nothing to shoot back with. He would later explain to General Joyce why that experience made him a firm believer in carrying a backup handgun.

Writes biographer Hirshon, "Patton related to Joyce that his attachment to two ivory-handled revolvers stemmed from the incident. During the fray, he had had to stop and reload his six-shooter. While he did, three shots just missed his head. Henceforth, in times of danger, he preferred to wear two Colt Frontier-model .45-caliber revolvers. Newspapers often described them as pearl-handled because it sounded more colorful."

We know that when asked about those "pearl handles" on a later occasion, General Patton angrily corrected the reporter who asked the question and sharply explained that they were ivory. "Only a New Orleans pimp," Patton snarled, "would carry a pearl-handled gun."

In his younger days, George Patton had competed in the Pentathlon, which included pistol shooting. He practiced to stay sharp with his handgun skills. Hirshon quotes General Hugh S. Johnson, Patton's tent-mate during the Mexican campaign.

"Georgie," he said, "used to sit in his tent by the hour practicing 'trigger-pull' with either hand on a pistol fitted with a spring and a rod which would dart out at a swinging pith ball at which he aimed. We used to call Georgie a Sears-Roebuck cowboy, because he wore a pistol cartridge belt low about his hips with two pearl handled forty-five revolvers in holsters, one on each groin — he never used an automatic pistol."

Well, "never" is a strong word. We know that at various times Patton carried a Colt Pocket Model "hammerless" during World War II, and a Remington Model 51 .380. It was the latter he emptied at a German fighter plane that was strafing his encampment as he stood defiantly in its sunsights, a scene graphically re-enacted by George C. Scott in the title role of the movie *Patton*. He also was seen on occasion with a Colt Detective Special .38 revolver on his hip. All had the Patton signature ivory grips, some inlaid with the stars of a U.S. Army general officer.

Eisenhower's Sidearm

Dwight D. Eisenhower was at various times Patton's peer, his admirer, his commander, and his *bete noir*. While many photos of Patton show him carrying one or two ivory-handled sidearms, Eisenhower is never depicted as visibly armed. However, the records show that he was issued and probably carried at least some of the time a Colt .38 Detective Special revolver with 2-inch barrel. "Ike" returned it to the Army when he retired. Its twin, with consecutive serial number, is on display at the Springfield Armory Museum in Springfield, Massachusetts.



Below: Patton confers with Lt. Col. Lyle Bernard. Right: Private Ernest A. Jenkins receives an award from Patton, whose ivory-stocked Model P Colt is visible. (photos courtesy National Archives)



WALTHER CP99





BY J.I. GALAN

Long-time German CO2 pistol maker Umarex has carved a huge niche in the world of air pistols with its steadily growing variety of pellet-firing replicas of some of the world's top centerfire handguns. Their most recent look-alike is the Walther CP99, an amazingly faithful copy of the justly famous 9mm Walther P99.

The latter is, for those who came in late, one of the most technically advanced law-enforcement/personal defense autoloaders currently on the market. As a matter of fact, the Walther P99 is so "chic" that super-secret agent 007 James Bond has been carrying it in his most recent action films.

Spittin' Image

In copying the looks of the 9mm P99, Umarex gave their .177 caliber clone a molded synthetic frame similar to that of the real McCoy. The dummy slide appears to be made of zinc alloy and is divided into two sections.

The front half slides forward to allow access to the rotary 8-shot magazine when the latch on the left side of the frame is depressed. The rear half of the "slide" can be pulled back, just as in the real thing, to cock the gun for single-action shooting, as well as to permit access to the rear sight windage adjustment screws.

"Magazine" Loaded

The CP99's power is provided by a standard disposable 12-gram CO2 cylinder housed in a magazine-like device that also contains the gas release valving mechanism. This entire assembly fits inside the pistol's grip and can be quickly reached by depressing the magazine release catch located at the base of the trigger guard.

This decidedly novel system allows the CP99 to be made safe by simply taking the CO2 power assembly out of the gun without having to dump the gas, as in other CO2 pis-

Above: CP99 in all black, and with satin nickel slide. An OD green and black version is available. **Below:** Depressing the magazine release reveals the 12-gram CO2 power plant.



The CP99 comes in a hard-shell padded case with accessories and comprehensive owner's manual.

tols. It also mimics most realistically the magazine loading/unloading operation of the centerfire P99.

Also following its 9mm cousin in some functional aspects, the CP99 can be decocked from single-action by depressing the black decocking plate located on the left rear of the slide, just ahead of the rear sight. I have to add, incidentally, that this pistol's single-action trigger is incredibly crisp. Despite not being adjustable, it was delightfully light in the samples tested. In its DA mode, likewise, the trigger pull was also a pure joy, easily as smooth as any we've tested in a general-purpose pellet pistol.

The CP99's trigger adds a manually operated safety consisting of a sliding catch located on the right side of the frame. Activating it disengages the trigger completely. In addition, opening the slide to gain access to the rotary pellet magazine also blocks the entire firing mechanism.

The rear sight can be adjusted for windage only. As previously indicated, the adjustment screws are accessible only from the bottom of the slide when the latter is fully retracted.

Another point where the CP99 mimics the P99 exactly is in the owner's ability to change the grip's fit in the hand. Like the P99, the CP99 comes with an extra molded backstrap that can be quickly switched to suit the shooter's grip.

Natural Pointer

In the performance department, the CP99 was truly impressive during tests. Using a variety of match (wadcutter) pellets, the muzzle velocity averaged 348 fps. That figure ran fairly close to Walther's published muzzle velocity of 360 fps for this model. Incidentally, each CO2 car-

continued on page 69

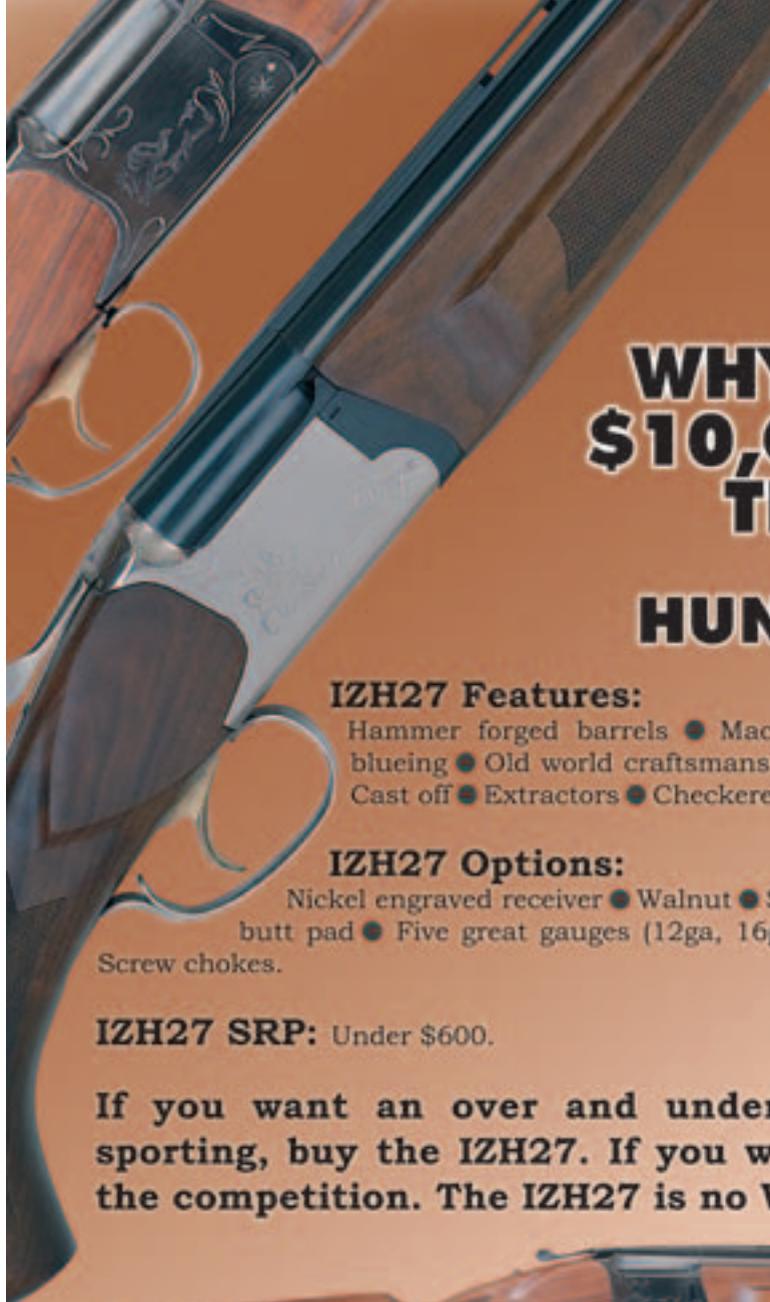
SPECIFICATIONS

Walther **CP99** Pistol

Manufacturer:	Umarex/Walther, Arnsberg, Germany
Caliber:	.177 (4.5 mm)
Power Plant:	Disposable 12-gram CO2 cylinder
Magazine Capacity:	8 pellets
Length Overall:	7.1 inches
Barrel Length:	3 inches, rifled steel
Weight:	26 ounces
Safety:	Manual, sliding catch
Trigger System:	CP single/double action; CPS is DA only
Sights:	Fixed front; rear adjustable for windage
MSRP:	\$99 to \$206



CP99 "Trophy"



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Gunsaddle

Have you seen a gun rack in the rear window of a pickup recently? They used to be as common as NRA stickers out here in the West, but no more. If you do see them, there's usually a carpenter's level or a fishing pole where the rifle and shotgun once rode. And what about our beloved SUVs? Where do you rack up a gun in them?

Well, if your state permits carrying an accessible shotgun or rifle in the passenger compartment of your vehicle, here is one new invention that is so simple it works. It's called the "Gunsaddle."

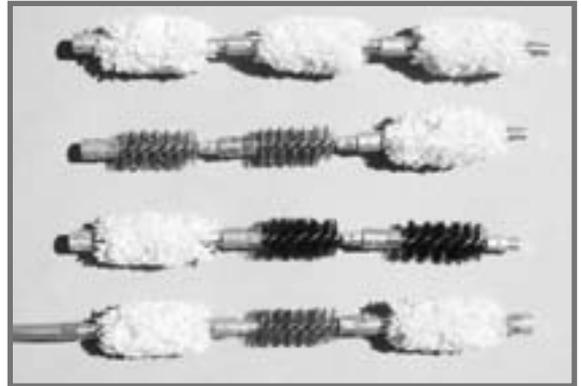
The "Gunsaddle" is a "V" shaped firearms carrier that is designed to be wedged between a bucket seat and the center console of a car or truck. It is formed from one piece of ABS plastic with a rubberized coating, and it looks to be indestructible. In use, the firearm is strapped into a "U" shaped cradle at the upper edge of the wedge and retained there by a wide elastic strap with Velcro closures.

Does it work? I've already tried the Gunsaddle in a Chevy Suburban, Ford F-150, Jeep Cherokee and Isuzu Trooper. In each case, the shotgun or rifle stayed put even over rough 4x4 trails. With two of these units in place, you can have a shotgun and a rifle readily accessible from the driver's and passenger's seats. And — attention waterfowlers — you can readily attach the Gunsaddle to the gunwales of a boat with a few stainless steel screws and washers. That's what I like about it. The Gunsaddle is simple, flexible, inexpensive, protects your firearm's finish, and solves a problem.

Outers Pow'r Scrubber

Here's a "Why didn't I think of it" tool. Outers Gunslick line has introduced the best shotgun cleaning tool invented in years. And again the concept is simple. Take a battery-powered hand drill type tool, connect it to an aluminum shotgun rod, and let a rotating bronze brush with a bit of solvent do all the dirty work.

Talk about a Roto-Rooter job! This power combination really gets the crud out. When it's time to use a patch, you cut the power, pull out a clutch ring that stops the rod from further rotation, drape a patch around the brush, and work the patch through the bore.



The Pow'r Scrubber is neatly packaged in a permanent plastic case together with 12- and 20-gauge brushes, cleaning patches, and a bottle of Gunslick Nitro Solvent. All that's missing is a preservative of some kind. It takes four AA batteries to power it up.

Brownells Unique Brush-Mop Combo

If you thought the evolution of the shotgun brush and wooly mop had ended, think again. Brownells, the gunsmith's mail-order emporium, has come up with an intriguing new design to combine brushes and mops in any sequence in order to do two or three jobs with every pass of the rod.

Their new line of 12-gauge, double ended brushes and mops sport a standard male 5/16-27 thread fitting on one end and a female 5/16-27 thread fitting on the other. The brushes are available in phosphor bronze or nylon and the mops are cotton.

How does the system work? There are any number of variations. Let's attach a mop to a brush to another mop that screws into the cleaning rod. Add solvent (Brownells markets a great shotgun wad solvent under their own name) to the first mop and the last mop. Bring on the Pow'r Scrubber. Now the first mop places solvent in front of the brush on the forward stroke and the second mop cleans things up following the brush and adds more solvent ahead of the brush on the return stroke. Put that combination into the bore and scrub away.

Now attach three mops in parallel. Add a preservative to the third mop that is attached to the rod. The first two mops clean and dry the bore and the third mop oils the bore. Just remember to remove the first two mops as they emerge from the muzzle to insure they are not pulled back through the bore. Or substitute two nylon brushes for the first two mops and wrap cotton patches around them. The cotton patches can be discarded and refreshed with new ones with a touch of preservative.

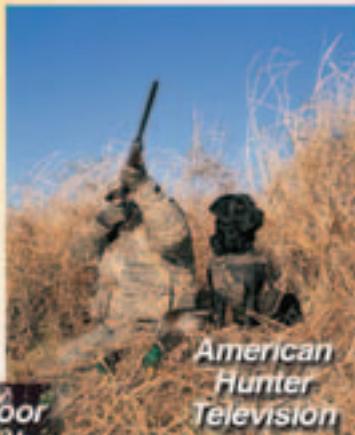
How do we clean all those mops? Easy. I keep an empty plastic laundry soap container on hand to clean mops and brushes and cartridge cases fired with black powder. Add a little water, a lot of Simple Green, drop the mops and brushes in, and shake, shake, shake. Pour out the residue, flush the bottle with clean water twice and let the mops and brushes air dry.



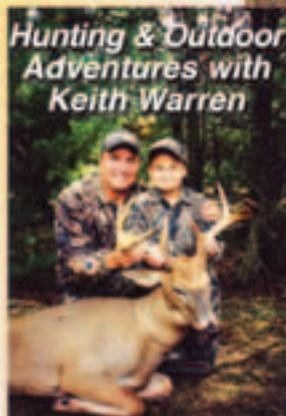
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- Joe Bucher Outdoors
- Midwest Outdoor Magazine
- Northwest Hunter
- O'Neill Outside
- Outdoor America
- Outdoor Traditions
- Red Hawk Outdoors
- Safari Hunters Journal
- Texas Trophy Hunters
- Wild Outdoors
- Woods N' Water



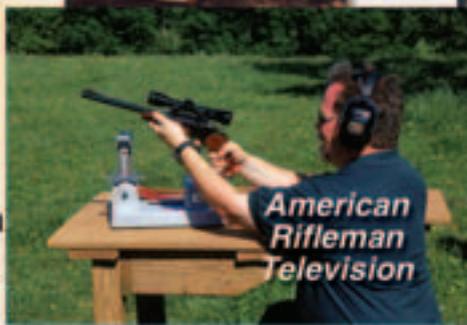
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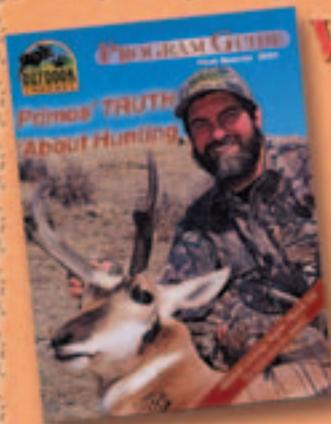
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NORTHERN INVASION!

**A look at talented Canadian knifemakers
Greg Lightfoot and Brian Tighe.**

STORY BY PAT COVERT

PHOTOS BY ICHIRO NAGATA

Lightfoot's Combat Axe might be better described as the Hatchet from Hades. Four inches of surface and a finger-grooved linen Micarta grip make this one upscale whacker. (right) The Lightfoot Operative combines clean-yet-innovative styling with unabashed stealth. The black on black theme features a powder-coated blade and scales are of linen Micarta. (facing page, top) Two Lightfoot folders done up in titanium bolsters and carbon fiber scales. At left is the Max Velocity model, on the right the .458 Magnum.



Although the storm to prominence of the tactical folder over the past half decade can be attributed in most part to U.S. custom knifemakers, a couple of talented bladesmiths from north of our border have offered up a blitzkrieg of their own. Canadians Greg Lightfoot and Brian Tighe (pronounced “tie”) have carved out a nice slice of the tactical folder market, and the duo show no signs of stopping.

If one needed proof that appearances don’t count for much, look no farther than these two knifemakers. Greg Lightfoot — replete with shaved head and muscular physique — fits the part of a clean-cut commando from central casting. An expert in martial arts and edged weapons combat, Lightfoot’s knife designs reflect the fluidity found in the controlled motion often seen in Asian weaponry.

Tighe, on the other hand, could easily be mistaken for a history professor. Wire rimmed spectacles, corkscrew shoulder length hair and a casual demeanor further add to the veneer. Ironically, his designs have a much edgier, more wicked quality about them than those of good friend and counterpart Lightfoot.

There is one huge similarity that runs parallel with both Canadians. Both are among the top tactical folder designers in the custom market today. Indeed, both Greg Lightfoot and Brian Tighe would make many experts’ top ten list among all tac-folder artisans.

Lightfoot Enlightens

While any custom knifemaker can sit down and sketch out a simple design, very few can do it with Lightfoot’s savvy. There is a difference between simple and insightful,



Canadian Connections Factory Tighes and Lightfoots.

If you're like me, and were not born with a Roman numeral after your name, there is very good news concerning Lightfoot and Tighe knives. Several top cutlery manufacturers are producing the designs of both knifemakers, making affordability a non-factor. The factory collaborations may not have the fancy handle materials or exotic blade steels found in the custom makers' wares, but they are quality knives nonetheless and will serve the average user admirably for many years.

Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT) offers several models from both makers. First off, there's the Tighe Tac model, a factory rendition of the tactical folder that helped put Brian Tighe on the map. Just over 6 inches in overall length, the CRKT Tighe Tac has a 2.63-inch spear point blade of AUS 6M stainless steel. A 3.38-inch handle with stainless steel bolsters and black Zytel® scales along with a stainless steel pocket clip complete the equation. Affordable? You bet! The knife,

available with a plain or partially serrated blade retails for just \$64.99.

CRKT has just released a new Lightfoot collaboration code named M1. This is a beefy, blacked-out tactical folder with Lightfoot's trademark "Millennium Tanto" blade design. At just over 7.5 inches fully opened — 3.21 inches of that in AUS 8 blade steel — this is a beefy folder with a few interesting twists.

First, it has a "flipper" feature that allows the blade to be accessed quickly. Next up is a Ron Lake/Michael Walker designed locking system — dubbed LAWKS® that allows for extra strong blade lockup. Finally, the handle has Zytel scales that carry a large hex-pattern resembling oversized checkering. A lot of knife for a suggested retail of just \$69.99.

Lone Wolf Knives offers a version of the Tighe Pan that is as close to a custom knife you'll find. This tactical folder features a finely finished machined titanium frame with ball-milled grooves for grip enhancement and blue anodized liners for added eye appeal. The 3.56-inch blade is made of CPM-S30V stainless steel — the same steel many of the hot custom makers are using today. At 7.88 inches fully extended, this is a nice size tactical capable of performing a wide variety of cutting chores. A pocket clip and a padded zippered carrying pouch are included.

The Lone Wolf Tighe Pan sells for a suggested retail of \$280. This may sound high, but considering that the overall quality of workmanship and top flight materials are right up there with the majority of fine custom knives and the price is some *two hundred dollars less*, this

knife a heck of a deal.

Timberline Knives latched onto Lightfoot a couple of years ago and produced the Zambezi fixed blade, 11.75 inches of highly versatile knife that can



Left: An exquisitely carved version of Tighe's neo-classic Folding Dagger. The frame is all titanium with multi-color anodizing, the blade a tight blend of patterned Damascus. Right: The My Tighe is a cocktail of combat delight. The carbon fiber scales have been curvaceously cutout to both accent the handle and enhance the grip.

and the latter is where this knifemaker excels. All of Lightfoot's knife designs — fixed blade or folder — have an unmistakable flow throughout their form from tip to base. While some look at a knife as the sum of its parts, Lightfoot looks at a knife as one piece, sculpted to perfection.

At 41 years of age, Lightfoot has accomplished more than many custom knifemakers do in an entire career. He's been considered a member of the elite top ten tactical knifemakers for half a decade and has his designs replicated by two major cutlery manufacturers.

Raised on a ranch in Alberta, Canada, Greg adopted a love for hunting at an early age and he credits his outdoor experiences for his love of knives. He spent his early job career as a machinist by trade, which prepped the way for his understanding of metallurgy and shaping steel. Throw in a passion for bodybuilding and deep interest — and training — in martial arts and it's easy to see how all these ingredients forged his mettle as a custom knifemaker.

Lightfoot designs both fixed blades and folders. He offers his customers a wide variety of steels, but his top choice is BG-42, an American-made stainless steel originally used in high-speed ball bearings. According to Greg, "I like BG-42 best because of its all-around capabilities. It has excellent edge-holding capabilities, is very corrosion resistant and finishes well." A satin finish is standard on all of Lightfoot's knives but for those who prefer the darkness of night, he offers a black powder-coating as well. For handle materials, the

handle every type of field and combat chore. With 6 inches devoted to blade, nearly half of the Zambezi's length is in the handle, which incorporates a large finger choil in the upper part of the grip. When gripped with the index finger above the choil, the Zambezi becomes an agile cutter with a feisty 6-inch 440C stainless steel, black powder coated blade. When gripped with all fingers below the finger choil more weight shifts to the blade, and the knife can be used for some serious hacking. In addition, the Zambezi comes with one of the most versatile Kydex® sheaths ever designed, all for a suggested \$150. A lot of knife for the money!

Timberline followed with Lightfoot's Mini Pit Bull neck knife, a small 6.60-inch bit of business that can be easily concealed until the necessity of using it arises. A 3-inch double-ground spear point blade does the cutting chores, Zytel handle scales makes them more comfortable. A nifty Kydex sheath with a belt clip on it that can be reversed or removed is included, as well as a bead chain for neck wear. The entire package sells for just \$39.99 suggested retail.



knifemaker leans toward the more durable synthetics such as G-10 (a fiberglass lay-up) and carbon fiber.

Fixed Blades And Folders

Greg's latest tour-de-force fixed blade is 10-inches of cutting delight dubbed the Operative, a knife which may best be described as a double-edged B-2 stealth bomber in mid-flight. This knife is typical of Lightfoot's well-planned designs. A lengthy handle with double finger grooves allows the user the grip option of either choking up on the knife for slicing and dicing or gripping it using only the lower finger choil for heavy duty chopping. The 4.75-inch modified drop point blade is recurved for maximum slice and ground razor-sharp on the backside to add more puncture power.

It is tactical folders, however, that are Lightfoot's main thrust. His knack for clean-yet-powerful design put him on the map, traits clearly seen in his more recent Max Velocity model. The Velocity's 3.25-inch blade, with its gracefully curved edge and deep hollow grind are poetry in steel. There is no departure in the handle either, just graceful curves that compliment the blade with both synchronicity and function. Smooth actions and sturdy liner-lock mechanisms for fixing the blade firmly in the open position are the Lightfoot norm. All of the knifemaker's folders come with a pocket clip as well.

At 7.5 inches overall, the Max Velocity is sized right where you want it — small



Two Tighe Sticks spell double trouble! The left model sports titanium bolsters and carbon fiber scales, the model at right has an all-titanium frame with machined arcs to enhance the grip.



enough to carry with ease and stealth, but large enough to handle both field and combat chores. Titanium liners cut down the Velocity's weight, and it can be had in two base levels: the standard model with titanium bolsters and a lower priced "Black Widow" version with 100 percent carbon fiber scales and black powder-coated blade.

More aggressive styling can be seen in Lightfoot's .458 Magnum model. The knife's 3.25-inch Japanese tanto-inspired blade has the tenacious styling found in the knifemaker's Zambezi collaboration with Timberline Knives (see sidebar). A short sabre grind on the backside of the blade improves its puncture power: a notched thumb ramp improves the grip. The Magnum opens up to 7.75 inches in length, with over four inches of that in a pugnacious handle stylistically befitting the business end of the knife. Once again, titanium bolsters and liners are standard.

Sometimes A Knife Won't Do

If "shock and awe" are on your agenda, Lightfoot offers a tactical axe that could scare the pants off of Attila the Hun. His 12.5-inch Combat Axe melds Medieval styling with modern-day design cues, bringing the art of chopping up to a new level. Four full square inches of razor sharp cutting surface do the chopping chores while a G-10 synthetic handle makes the experience all the more comfortable.

Tighe Intimidates

If Greg Lightfoot's knives come off as poetry in motion, Brian Tighe's read like a horror novel. His designs use wicked curves and angles to intimidate, and lest one take them for only a notion, he backs them up with quality materials and superb fit and finish. Not surprisingly, 48-year old master machinist Tighe enjoys the creative end of the knifemaking process. In his own words, "I truly enjoy designing and creating new models. I can see the knife in my mind's eye, then it goes to paper, and then I make it out of steel and titanium. This is the most rewarding aspect, from conceiving the design to finally holding the finished knife."

Tighe's most popular model is the Tighe Stick. One quick glance at the Stick is all it takes to know this knifemaker took a different fork a long time ago. The 3.5-inch BG-42 stainless steel blade is a creative cocktail of upswept Persian styling with a Japanese tanto grind. In the closed position the blade rests in a curvaceous handle with a deep finger groove for added grip enhancement. Using titanium as a palette, Tighe offers the knife in a full frame or bolstered and scaled. An optional blade flipper for quick opening is available, and a pocket clip is standard. All of Tighe's folders use the tried and proven Michael Walker liner-lock for positively securing the blade in the opened position.

Charging Rhino Effect

Straighter in overall form but curvaceous nonetheless is the knifemaker's My Tighe model. The knife's 3.5-inch modified spear point blade — upswept to a double ground point — has the look of a charging rhino. The handle of the My Tighe features a deep finger groove at the top, a bulged center to better fit the palm and a hooked base that helps trap the grip. The frame is titanium topped with unique black G-10 overlays with an array of curves and cutouts that give the knife an ornate look as well as improve the grip. A pocket clip and lanyard hole in the base of the knife fill out the design.

Those who appreciate the history of edged weaponry will enjoy Tighe's Folding Dagger. Certainly his most traditional design, this folder draws on medieval themes and Tighe's slick mechanics brings them up to modern day standards. This is one of the oldest models in Tighe's line and he has done it up in many ways over the years, from a scaled and bolstered version to an upscale interframe (solid handle with decorative insert) variation.

On the uptown models you're more likely to find the 3.5-inch blade done up in exquisitely patterned Damascus steel, and the knifemaker offers a wide range of exotic handle materials such as fossil mammoth ivory and pearl. In fact, Tighe offers all of his knives with such options, all designed around a particular customer's preferences.

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Hot Properties

Super design and superior craftsmanship have kept these two knifemaker's designs in constant demand. One such person who knows is Larry Connelley of KnifeArt.com, one of the best stock custom knife purveyors on the internet. Larry states, "You don't want to run out of Greg and Brian's knives. They've been two of my hottest sellers for years, so I buy deep from both." When asked why he thought Lightfoot and Tighe sold so well he replied, "We have sold both Lightfoot and Tighe knives for over five years. We have developed several exclusive custom knife series with the two knifemakers. Each exclusive was a total success. Several top production companies have worked with the makers to develop collaboration production knives."

Pricewise, Greg Lightfoot's fixed blades average \$300 for smaller models and \$450 for the big guys. His folders start at \$425 for certain base models and go up from there depending on materials and configuration. Brian Tighe's folders start at \$450 and increase in price according to materials and extras. If you're on a budget, check out the sidebar accompanying this article for the wide variety of production knives based on Lightfoot and Tighe designs. For a closer look at current offerings from both knifemakers, see the contact information at the end of this article, or check out the current offerings on KnifeArt.com.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Lightfoot Knives
[780] 846-2812
www.lightfootknives.com

Tighe Knives
[905] 892-2734
www.tigheknives.com

Knifeart.Com
www.knifeart.com

Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT)
[800] 891-3100
www.crkt.com

Lone Wolf Knives
17400 SW Upper Boones Ferry
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Some love lever-action rifles because they are old-style, nostalgic guns. Others prefer more modern firearms with all the bells and whistles. That's why everybody loves the Browning BLR Lightweight '81, because it's both. It has the traditional styling of a lever action with its original '81-style straight stock. But, with its rack and pinion action and multi-lug rotary bolt, the BLR is the most modern lever action you can buy. The action is smoother and stronger than levers of old and is available in calibers you won't get in grandpa's gun either, like both long- and short-action magnums. It's everything you love about the old and the new and it only occupies one notch in your gun safe.

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BROWNING

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HANDLOADER BY CHARLES E. PETTY

Starline Brass

One of the neatest stories for shooters and reloaders is the rise of Starline Brass. It is hard to overstate the effect they have had on our sport.

Starline began in 1976 when Bob Hayden and Frank Snow, both from Sierra Bullets, recognized a need for brass that was not being met by the major manufacturers. They didn't want to sell brass in the first place and generally only sold it when they had over-runs. Starline was incorporated in 1976 and began the process of acquiring equipment and making tools. "Frank Snow was a wizard with machinery," said Barbara Hayden, CFO of Starline. They sold their first piece of .38 Special brass in 1978.

Starline's market was to smaller commercial loaders such as Zero Bullet Co., Pro Load Ammunition and Master Cartridge. But they were also the secret supplier of cases to some of the major manufacturers who simply didn't have enough capacity or, more commonly, only needed relatively small quantities of a specific case. Starline always has, and will today, make brass with custom headstamps. So if I wanted to have some, "Charlie's .45 ACP" and was willing to order 100,000 pieces I could.

Providential Meeting

But the course of reloading as we know it was set when Bob Hayden of Starline and Larry Potterfield of Midway got together. Midway Arms was a small gun shop that was doing a brisk business in 8mm Nambu ammunition loaded in reformed brass. Potterfield wanted Starline to make some brass for him.

According to Potterfield they couldn't do that, but they did have some .357 Magnum brass if he was interested. An ad in *Shotgun News* produced a demand far greater than expected and the business of selling bulk brass was born.

Of course this didn't happen overnight, but gradually Starline added more and more cases to their product line. And, seemingly all at once, the public learned their name. In a way Starline had been one of the industry's best kept secrets because much of their work was done for the big ammo companies and did not bear the distinctive Starline *—* headstamp. The first time I saw it was in the earliest

10mm ammo that Federal made for the FBI's development of their new service pistol.

Starline and Sierra moved to Sedalia, Mo., and operate out of separate buildings next door to one another. Gradually new calibers were added to the catalog and then they went public and small ads began to appear. With that came direct sales to the consumer which continue today.

If The Demand Is There...

The coolest thing is their willingness to manufacture cases for cartridges that are either obsolete or nearly so. I learned this after spending several months forming .30 Mauser cases from 9mm Winchester Magnum brass. The article was about loading the Mauser so you could shoot the abundant new supply of Broomhandle Mauser pistols coming from China. Just as I completed the work I learned that Starline was going to sell brass. Just bad timing on my part I guess.

The other thing Starline does is work with smaller ammo companies in the development of new cartridges. They are also responsive to what customers want, and the huge demand generated by the blossoming Cowboy matches has led them to make a whole range of obsolete and semi-obsolete cases for this trade. Examples include .32-20 Winchester, .38 Short and Long Colt, .38-40, .44-40, .41 Colt, .44 Russian, .44 Colt and .45 S&W (Schofield).

The availability of brass for these oldies makes it possible to shoot some vintage guns that might otherwise be neglected. Recently they've begun to make some cases for old black powder rifles in .40-65, .45-70, .45-90 and .45-100, which will breathe new life into lots of nice old Winchesters.

Starline's business is bulk brass so if you just want a small quantity they can't help you. Most calibers are sold in packages of 500 although the rifle cases and some such as .38-40 and .44-40 are sold in packages of 250. That really isn't too many for most of us.

Indication Of Quality

To me the best measure of the quality of a piece of brass is how easy it is to load and how long it lasts. Much to my chagrin, I rarely keep track of the number of times I load a piece of handgun brass. However, I shoot .44 Special and .45 Colt quite a bit for fun and haven't lost a single piece of the original 500 that have been around for a couple of years now. My best guess is that all have been loaded five times and some doubtless more.

Another, even more impressive accomplishment is with Starline's .38-40 and .44-40 brass. Everybody knows that those cases are quite thin at the mouth but there have been no losses there either. This says to me that they make good brass. And since they're celebrating their 25th Anniversary other folks must think so too.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Starline Brass
[800] 280-6660
www.starlinebrass.com

450 REASONS TO OWN THE M1A



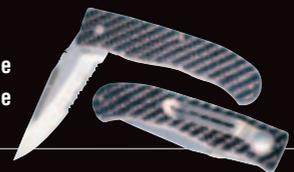
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You Can Win This **KIMBER 84M PACKAGE**

Kimber's charming 84M series of center-fire sporters has reminded us what a classically styled rifle *should* look like. The heart of the 84M Kimber is a delightfully compact action which is in keeping with the compact cartridges currently so popular. Holt Bodinson, reviewing an early sample praised the Kimber as, "an esthetically pleasing, well-balanced and handy rifle." Looking at this 84M one lucky *GUNS* reader will win, I'd say Holt was right on the money.

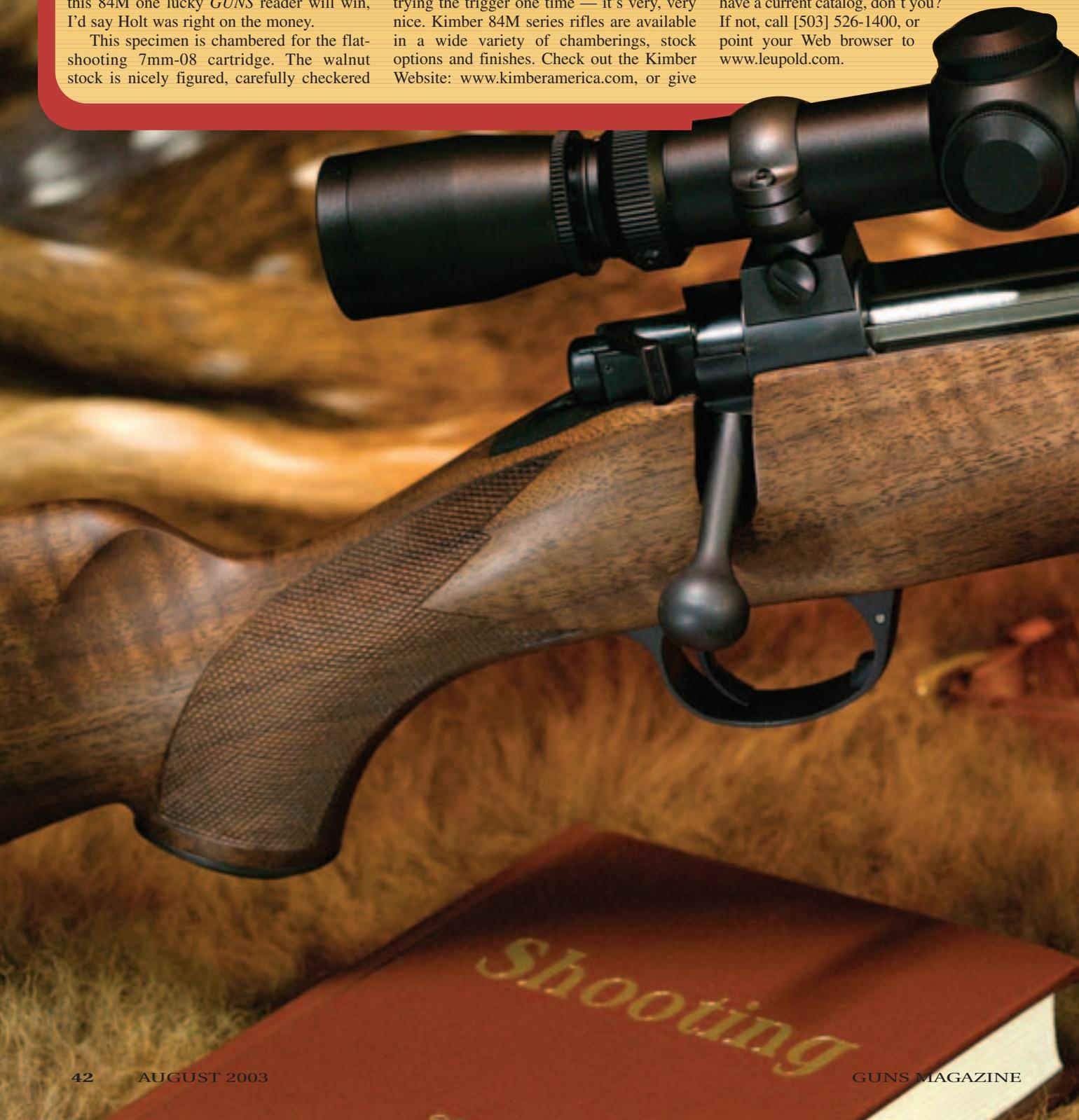
This specimen is chambered for the flat-shooting 7mm-08 cartridge. The walnut stock is nicely figured, carefully checkered

and shows very good wood-to-metal fit. The barrel and action are matte finished as befits a hunting rifle, and the Mauser-type claw extractor offers the controlled round feeding serious riflemen prefer.

The 84M has received wide acclaim not merely because it's such a graceful and handsome rifle, but also because they shoot phenomenally well. Of course I couldn't resist trying the trigger one time — it's very, very nice. Kimber 84M series rifles are available in a wide variety of chamberings, stock options and finishes. Check out the Kimber Website: www.kimberamerica.com, or give

them a call at [800] 880-2418.

A fine rifle like the 84M deserves an equally fine telescope. The good folks at Leupold kindly supplied a Vari-X 3x9 Compact scope with duplex reticle. Bright, clear and tough-as-nails, the matte finished Compact is a perfect mate to the Kimber rifle. There are always lots of new and interesting things in the works at Leupold. You do have a current catalog, don't you? If not, call [503] 526-1400, or point your Web browser to www.leupold.com.



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ROY HUNTINGTON PHOTO



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QUESTION OF THE MONTH:
I visit Shooting Industry websites:

- (A) Frequently
- (B) Occasionally
- (C) Rarely

Name _____
 Address _____
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CIRCLE ANSWERS TO QUESTION OF THE MONTH:
 (A) (B) (C)
 IF I WIN, SHIP MY GUN THROUGH:
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LEVERGUNS



Have a question. This question is only slightly more difficult than those found on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*? However, if you are a real shooter you should be able to answer it. What is the most popular rifle cartridge, and also what is the number one selling reloading die set according to RCBS sales?

The answer is the same for both and it shouldn't take much gray matter to come up with it — the .30-'06 Springfield. Long, long ago, Col. Townsend Whelen said, "The 30-'06 is never a mistake." Our other Colonel, Jeff Cooper has said basically the same thing except for its use on a few highly dangerous game animals.

Better Mousetrap Not Required

The .30-'06, or as it's often referred to, the "ought-six," is just about to celebrate its 100th anniversary. It began as the .30-'03 in 1903, and was slightly changed three years later to become our reigning champion rifle cartridge. Now consider what this means. In this highly technological world with seemingly everything changing overnight, rifle shooters for the most part go along with what worked for

their father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and even possibly great great-grandfather.

This is the reality firearms and ammunition manufacturers must face. Do we dare introduce a new rifle cartridge? Of course, there have been many successes such as the .270 Winchester, the 7mm Remington Magnum, and the .338 Winchester, however, the jury, that is to say the buying public, is still out on the new Short Magnum cartridges recently introduced. For now at least, the .30-'06 still reigns.

The .30-'06 has been offered in bolt actions, semi-automatics, pump actions, lever guns, and single-shots, including the relatively new Thompson/Center Encore handgun. However it's the bolt action .30-'06 that is first in the hearts of American hunters. Now there is that stubborn bunch that prefers leverguns, but the reality for this latter group is leverguns for hunting are normally chambered either for .30-30 or .45-70.

Supercharging The M94

The former is rarely talked about, it just keeps getting the job done, while .45-70 users always want to talk about their choice and how potent it is. Put all of this together, and what should have been welcomed as a great new cartridge for hunting leverguns should also have sold faster than they could be made. But it was not to be.

BY JOHN TAFFIN

NEWSLOADS

A look at Winchester's ill-fated Big Bores, the .375 and .356.



Someone at Winchester came up with the idea of modernizing the ancient Winchester Model 94 on the inside, while keeping the basic configuration on the outside. By beefing up the Model 94, the grand old design would be able to accommodate pressures in the range of 37,000 to 52,000 CUP (Copper Units of Pressure). That puts it in the same range as .308 and .30-'06 bolt actions. A Model 94 chambered in .308? Now that should be a winner!

Three new cartridges would be introduced. The rimmed version of the .308 Win. became the .307 Winchester, the .358 Winchester's rimmed counterpart was the .356 Winchester, while the 100 year-old .38-55 was modernized into the .375 Winchester.

The .375 Winchester came first in 1978 in the then new Model 94 Big Bore. Meanwhile Winchester became USRAC, and in 1983 the Model 94 Big Bore became the Model 94 XTR Angle Eject. This signaled an interior change that would cause the spent cartridge cases to be ejected at an angle to the right instead of straight up — facilitating the use of a scope. The other two new chamberings, the .307 and .356 Winchester, would be introduced with the Angle Eject Model.

Marlin also jumped on the bandwagon, but not for long. The .375 Winchester would be produced from 1980 to 1983 with a total of 16,315 Model .375s being offered with 20-inch barrels. Marlin announced the .307, but it's generally

Left (top-bottom): A variety of powders that can be used in the .356 Winchester. ***Hornady, Sierra, and Speer all offer excellent bullets for use in the .356 Winchester.*** A side-by-side comparison of the big bore cartridges offered in traditionally sized leverguns: the .35 Remington, the .356 Winchester, and the .375 Winchester. ***The .375 Winchester with loads using the 200 gr. Sierra and 220 gr. Hornady Flat Nosed jacketed bullets.***

believed they never let any out of the plant, while the .356 Winchester was found in the Marlin 336ER (Extra Range). The latter is relatively rare with only 2,441 manufactured for the three years of 1983 through 1986.

Marlin got out very quickly, while Winchester/USRAC tried to hold on to all three chamberings for a while longer. Regardless, they did not make it into the 1990s. The .375 Big Bore Model 94 was dropped in 1988.

Cold Reception

Winchester's bold experiment of the Model 94 Big Bore fell flat. Shooters took to these three new modern lever gun cartridges like a duck takes to cement. Instead of setting sales records, they were quietly removed from production, and are still easy to find in gun shops and gun shows in new or nearly new condition at extremely attractive prices.

The .375 Winchester, which was nothing more than Winchester's attempt to modernize the .38-55, had died. Strangely enough, the .38-55, a black powder cartridge dating back to the 1880s, is still available in current production leverguns. For a time, the .375 was also a standard offering in the T/C Contender. Alas, even this one is gone. This is especially regrettable, as it was the most effective factory chambering ever offered in the Contender except for the .45-70.

So what went wrong? Winchester had tried to modernize lever actions before with the Model 88. That didn't last, so this time they maintained the traditional look of the Model 94 and it still didn't work. Shooters will accept the Model 94 in .30-30, even in sixgun cartridges such as the .45 Colt, .44 Magnum and .357 Magnum. Perhaps it has been ingrained in levergun shooter's minds that the Model 94 is basically a short-range, brush and woods rifle, and they simply would not accept three new cartridges that greatly expanded the effective range of the traditional saddle gun.

The .307 Winchester offers more than the .300 Savage, while the .356 Winchester and .375 Winchester are surely capable of taking anything that walks on this continent. Perhaps the latter two would have survived if they had been placed in a heavier rifle, as recoil with both in the light-weight Model 94 is best described as brisk.



LEVERGUN LOADS

THE .375 WINCHESTER

Cast Bullet Loads

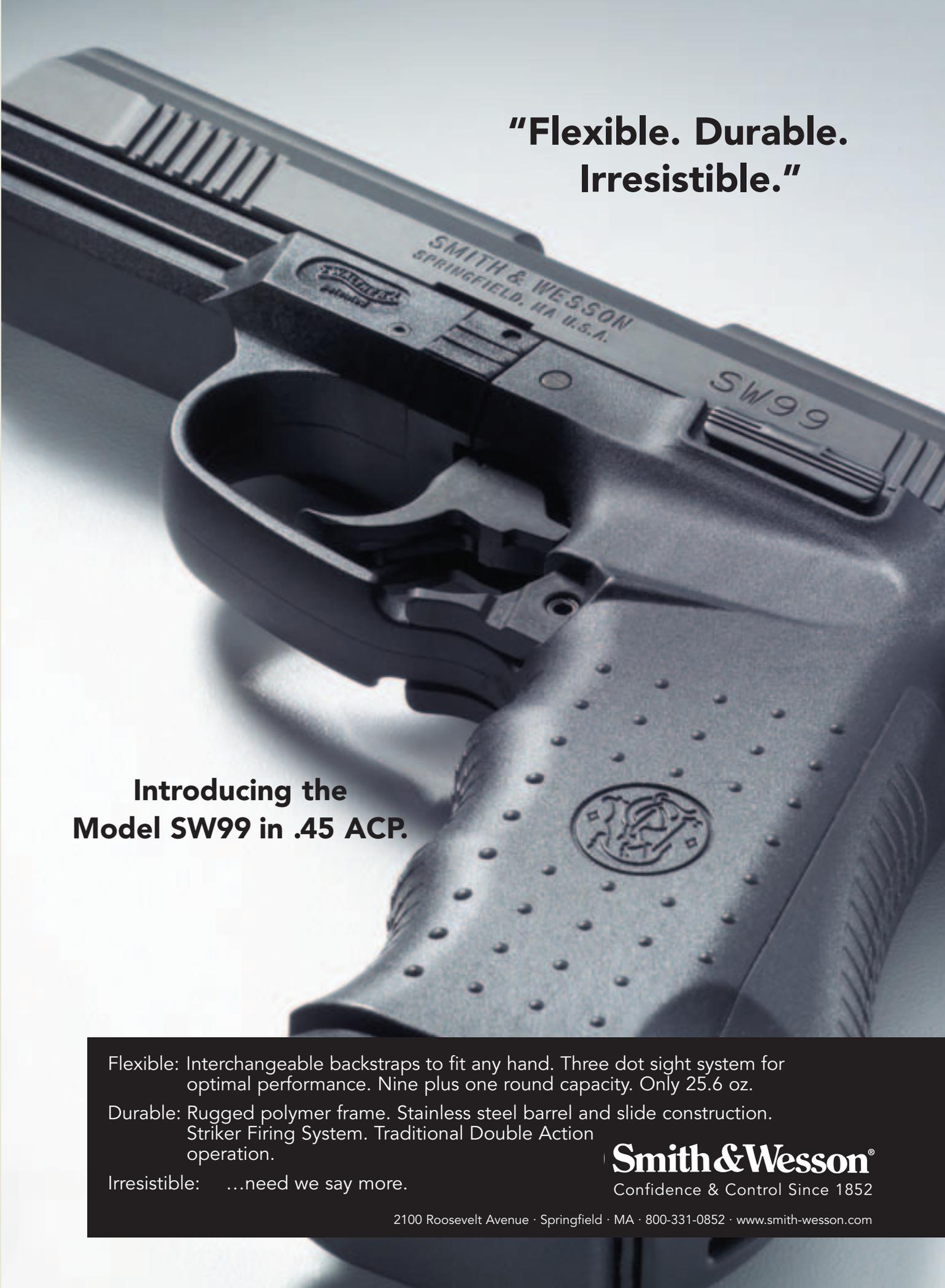
BULLET	LOAD	MV	3 SHOTS/50 YARDS
Lyman 250 gr. FNGC	16.0 gr. XMP5744	1,121	1¼"
Lyman 250 gr. FNGC	30.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,987	1"
Lyman 250 gr. FNGC	28.0 gr. AA1680	1,879	1½"
Lyman 250 gr. FNGC	30.0 gr. IMR3031	1,766	1¾"
RCBS #37-250 gr. FNGC	20.0 gr. H4198	1,398	1½"
RCBS #37-250 gr. FNGC	37.0 gr. BLC-2	1,751	2"

Jacketed Bullet Loads

BULLET	LOAD	MV	3 SHOTS/50 YARDS
Winchester 200 gr. PPSP	Factory	2,121	2¾"
Winchester 250 gr. PPSP	Factory	1,843	2¾"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	36.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,050	1"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	38.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,227	2½"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	34.0 gr. AA#2015	1,762	1¾"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	36.0 gr. AA#2015	1,897	1½"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	36.0 gr. H322	2,021	1½"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	38.0 gr. H322	2,092	1½"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	38.0 gr. IMR3031	1,918	7/8"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	34.0 gr. H4198	2,116	1¾"
Sierra 200 gr. FP	36.0 gr. H4198	2,199	1"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	34.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,905	1½"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	36.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,229	2"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	34.0 gr. AA#2015	1,805	2"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	36.0 gr. AA#2015	1,893	1¾"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	38.0 gr. AA#2015	2,051	1½"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	36.0 gr. H322	2,039	1"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	38.0 gr. H322	2,111	1 7/8"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	36.0 gr. IMR3031	1,801	1½"
Hornady 220 gr. FP	38.0 gr. IMR3031	1,958	1¼"

THE .356 WINCHESTER

BULLET	LOAD	MV	3 SHOTS/50 YARDS
Winchester 250 gr. PPSP	Factory	2113	1"
Speer 180 gr. FN	38.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,193	1½"
Speer 180 gr. FN	40.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,367	1½"
Speer 180 gr. FN	48.0 gr. H335	2,550	1"
Speer 180 gr. FN	44.0 gr. AA#2015	2,438	1½"
Speer 180 gr. FN	46.0 gr. AA#2015	2,533	1½"
Speer 180 gr. RN	48.0 gr. AA#2520	2,551	1¾"
Speer 220 gr. FN	33.0 gr. Reloder 7	1,996	1¼"
Speer 220 gr. FN	35.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,129	1½"
Speer 220 gr. FN	42.0 gr. AA#2520	2,065	1¾"
Speer 220 gr. FN	44.0 gr. AA#2520	2,170	1¾"
Speer 220 gr. FN	36.0 gr. AA#2015	1,951	5/8"
Speer 220 gr. FN	38.0 gr. AA#2015	2,071	1¼"
Speer 220 gr. FN	44.0 gr. H335	2,313	1½"
Speer 220 gr. FN	46.0 gr. H335	2,405	7/8"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	46.0 gr. AA#2520	2,175	5/8"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	38.0 gr. AA#2015	2,031	1¾"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	40.0 gr. AA#2015	2,086	1½"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	46.0 gr. H335	2,358	1/2"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	48.0 gr. H335	2,477	1¾"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	35.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,104	2½"
Hornady 200 gr. RN	37.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,200	2½"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	44.0 gr. AA#2520	2,127	1¼"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	46.0 gr. AA#2520	2,156	1¼"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	38.0 gr. AA#2015	2,026	1¼"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	40.0 gr. AA#2015	2,109	1"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	46.0 gr. H335	2,375	1½"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	48.0 gr. H335	2,471	1½"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	35.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,140	1¼"
Sierra 200 gr. RN	37.0 gr. Reloder 7	2,191	1½"



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SW99 BIG BORE STYLE

“Best of the breed,” says Petty, especially with a .45 ACP version now available.

By Charles E. Petty

I was one of a small group of writers who managed to get an early look at the Walther P99 when it was introduced by the now defunct Interarms. The P99 was Walther's entry into the fray with a polymer frame pistol. It was intended to compete with Glock in the law enforcement market, but it also brought to the table some very clever design innovations.

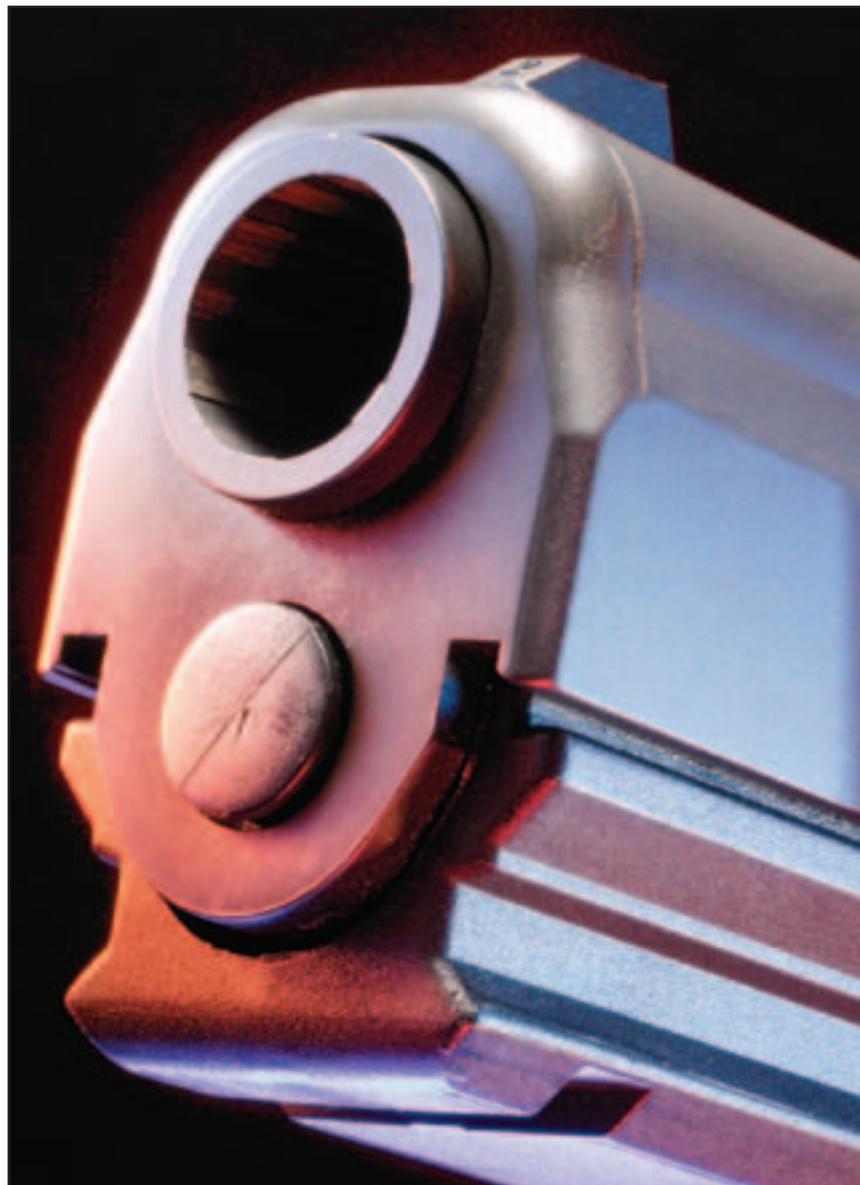
To simplify things a lot they constructed a striker-fired pistol that behaved just like the true double-action we know so well.

But what we didn't know at the time was Interarms' days were numbered. Nor did we know S&W and Walther were about to begin a series of negotiations that culminated in S&W becoming the exclusive importer of Walther products. There's more: S&W liked the P-99 design, so an agreement was made for S&W to buy completed frames from Walther and finish the guns with slides and barrels made by S&W. In the process a few cosmetic changes were made to the frame, and the S&W logo magically appeared on the grip. *Voila* we have the SW99.

The original plans were to follow the 9mm version with a .40 S&W chambering and we were told a .45 ACP was further down the road. Well, we're four or five years out now and the .45 is here. One momentary point of confusion is that all are called SW99s, with the caliber specified separately.

Three-Mode Trigger

Since it's been awhile let's go back and review the interesting features of the SW99 design. The trigger mechanism is a bit different from what we're used to. First of all it is a double-action with multiple strike capability. It has the long stroke we're all used to with a pull weight of about 10.5



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SW99

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Load	Velocity	1	2	3	Avg.
Federal 165 gr. Personal Defense	979	2.45"	2.71"	2.48"	2.55"
Remington 185 gr. JHP	982	2.93"	2.80"	2.59"	2.77"
Speer 230 gr. Gold Dot	795	2.96"	2.51"	2.57"	2.68"
Winchester 230 gr. Personal Protection	802	3.38"	3.29"	4.32"	3.66"
Average For All Loads: 2.92"					

pounds. Trigger travel in double-action is about .6 inch. The single-action pull is about 6 pounds, with a travel of .3 inch.

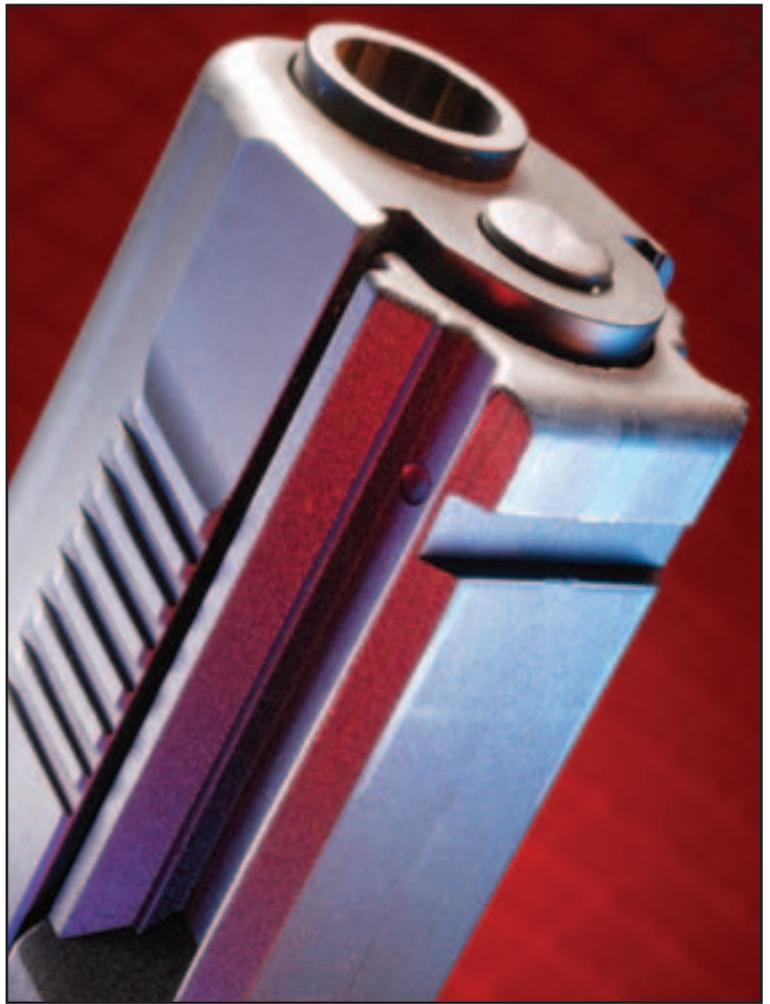
To me the length of trigger travel is more important than the weight. When a cop is in the middle of an adrenaline dump, he isn't as likely to notice the weight of pull as he is the amount of trigger travel.

On top of the slide, to the left and just forward of the rear sight is a decocking button. We're so used to levers performing this function that it takes a mental gear change to learn it. It is probably best considered a two handed operation and it's easy enough to bring the weak hand up to decock.

It is possible to reach the button with the right thumb, but it really requires a substantial grip shift to apply the force needed to decock. Thus the best tactical use will be with the weak hand.

There is a third trigger-related function to understand. When you load the pistol, the striker will be in the cocked position, but the trigger will be fully forward as in double-action. At this point there will be a long take-up with only slight spring tension. There's about .3 inch of movement before the trigger reaches the point where further pressure will fire the pistol. This is a necessary artifact of the design and not comparable to "cocked and locked" as we know from the 1911 style pistol.

The P99 has the customary passive firing pin and disconnecter safeties. But the decock operation renders the pistol completely safe so we should include it as an external safety.





Ambi Magazine Release

Another really neat feature is the truly ambidextrous magazine release. We're so used to buttons on the frame that this one is going to look strange but, in fact, it is nicely workable. At first glance the magazine release looks as if it is part of the trigger guard, but is a lever that, when pushed down, drops the magazine. It's easily operated by the trigger finger of either hand.

The pistol has cocking and loaded chamber indicators that are both visual and tactile. When cocked, the striker protrudes a bit from the back of the slide. It has a red painted tip that is only visible when cocked. You can also feel it in the dark if necessary. The extractor is almost two inches long and when the hook is pushed outward by the cartridge rim it reveals a spot of red paint on the slide at the back of the extractor. You can also feel that the back end is depressed a bit.

Highly Adaptable

One of the cool features that made the P99 so appealing from a law enforcement perspective was the interchangeable backstrap that offered sizes to fit almost any hand. It is easily interchanged by knocking out a single roll pin and since the backstrap is a separate part with no mechanical function, it is user serviceable.

Another great convenience is the inclusion of a set of four front sights of different heights. These are easily interchanged with the tool provided. This allows the point of impact to be regulated for loads of different velocities. The rear sight is adjustable for windage with a simple screw.

It's nice to have this latitude although most of the factory installed front sights have been very close. That was the case for the new .45 when fired with most 230-grain loads. There is an equipment groove on the dust cover of the frame if you want to hang lights or supplementary aiming devices on there too.

Since the basic design is wide body, the P99 .45 has a capacity of 9+1. Ten .45s is a good thing. It was a bit tough to get the last two cartridges into the magazine but this



improved with use. Sometimes high capacity .45 magazines have a problem with first round feed due to excessive spring tension but that never showed up here. Nor did I experience any of the last round feed glitches that are often caused by a spring that is having to work too hard to lift that last heavy .45 round.

No-Fumble Field Strip

The takedown latch is located right above the trigger and couldn't be much easier. With the pistol unloaded and decocked, all that's needed is to pull down on the latch and slide the top end off.

It may be helpful to put just a tad of pressure to the rear on the slide just to let the latch move easier, but it is not required. This is a no-fumble field strip. The recoil spring is a captive unit of spring and guide rod and is easily removed. The barrel tips out in the customary manner.

In every way mechanical the .45 is just like the other SW99s, it just seems bigger and is a tad heavier at 25.6 ounces. But when I tried it in the holster I'm using for the .40 S&W version it fit perfectly. That started a bunch of measurement comparisons. The difference I found turned out to be a magazine that was slightly larger in the front to rear dimension — which makes sense — and an extra 1/8-inch of barrel and slide length. I'm not sure why, but the 9mm has a 4-inch barrel, the .40's is 4 1/4 inches and the .45 measures 4 1/2 inches in length. Only we professionals with properly calibrated eyeballs would have detected such a tiny difference. The fact the slide stuck out of the holster just a bit may have been a clue.

Recalcitrant Trigger

When I began to shoot my sample SW99 .45, the trigger was a difficult feature. Even though the measured weights aren't bad for a duty pistol it took some real work to shoot it well. The single-action has a long take-up, which is fine, but then it comes to a solid stop. At this point a bit more steady pressure releases the trigger, which is actually pretty crisp.

It almost reminds me of special trigger jobs done on PPC revolvers where you could stage the double-action trigger by coming back sharply to a trigger stop with a rubber tip. You only had to compress the rubber a little to finish the shot and it was almost like firing in single-action mode.

I had a couple of shooting buddies run some break-in rounds through the gun at first and both complained (one quite bitterly) about the trigger. The gripes were not unreasonable although we need to keep in mind that this is a duty pistol. Nevertheless, when I compared it to the other two SW99s it was quite a bit heavier. I did two things that helped improve this.

First was to apply a glob of grease to the striker and the moving parts of the trigger within the frame. Next was to dry fire the pistol — a lot. This actually worked wonders

and while it's still heavy, it feels a lot better. It's one of those things that should continue to improve with use.

During the course of function and accuracy testing there were no feed or extraction malfunctions but there were two instances of a premature engagement of the slide stop after a couple of rounds had been fired. Examination traced this to a single magazine. It also showed where one of the feed lips dragged on the underside of the slide. There was a noticeable spot on one feed lip where the blue was completely worn away. This is one of those things that is self-correcting and again, was only observed with one magazine.

The premature slide stop engagement may need a little explanation. Pistols whose slides lock back when the last round is fired do so by having the magazine follower engage the tip of the slide stop that extends through the frame. Sometimes a rising cartridge in the magazine can twist a little and accidentally hit the slide stop. My experience has been that this happens most often with .45 ACP pistols firing 230-grain ammo. The bullet is heavier so it has more inertia.

We don't even think about it, but the fact is that the cartridges in a magazine actually get bounced around a lot during recoil. In this case my guess is that the one magazine may have had a little less spring tension.

It is also not unusual for the shooter to be responsible if the grip happens to shift during recoil and hit the slide stop. Either way, once the cause is found it is easily fixed by either replacing the magazine or adjusting the grip.

Cast Bullet Capable

Test firing has included just about every configuration and weight of bullet, including reloads with both cast and jacketed bullets. With the exception of the problems traced to that one magazine there have been no stoppages. The SW99 barrel has conventional broached rifling so there is no concern over shooting lead bullets.

Polymer frame pistols have become a significant factor in both civilian and law enforcement armament. None of the earlier projected horrors have come to pass — they don't melt in the sunshine or allow wholesale use of "invisible" guns by terrorists or malcontent airline passengers.

They have proven themselves to be both durable and practical. And in that regard the original P99 broke some new ground with a striker firing mechanism that emulates the old standby double-action. To me the SW99 is the best of the breed just made even better by addition of the .45 ACP chambering.

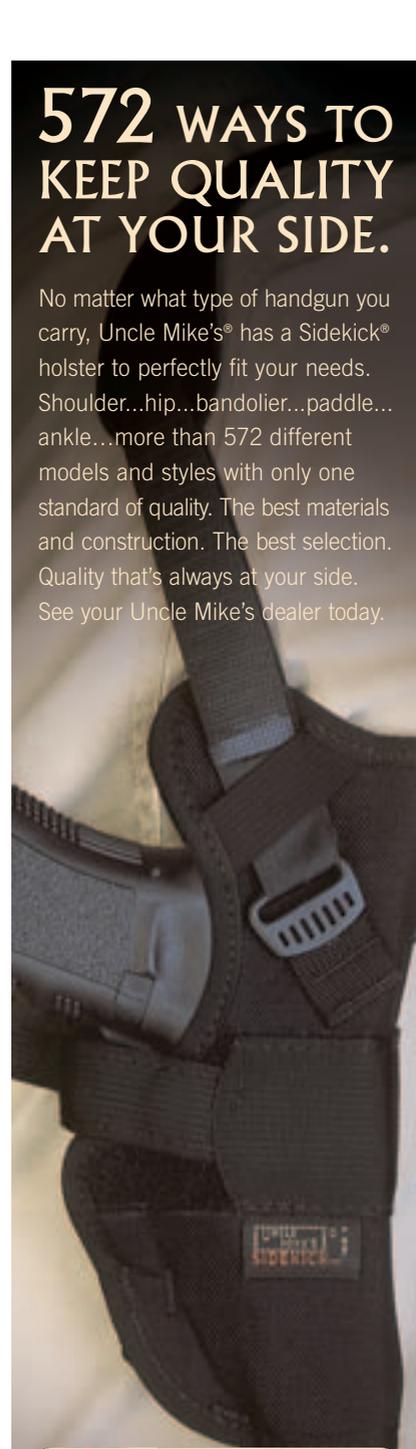


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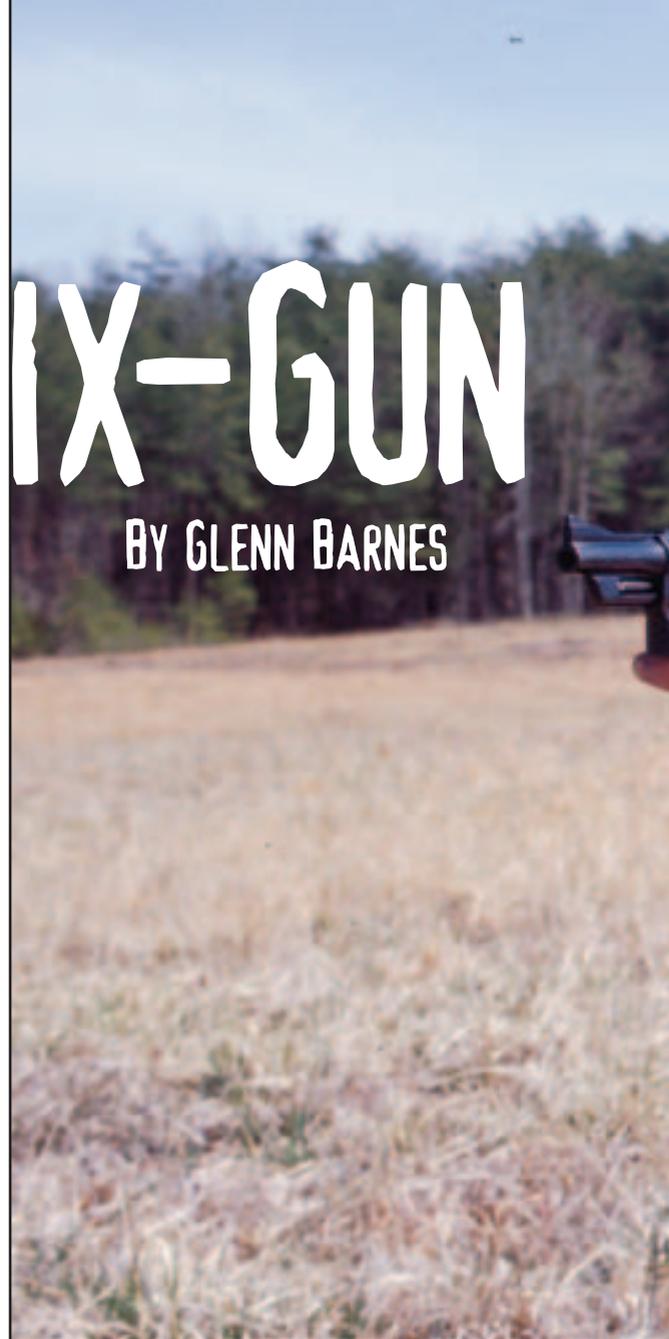
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TALE OF THE TALKING SIX-GUN

MOST OF US HAVE SAID, "IF ONLY THIS GUN COULD TALK." THE AUTHOR SEEMS TO HAVE FOUND ONE THAT WON'T KEEP STILL.

BY GLENN BARNES



The rambling tentacles of an errant north breeze assaulted my senses, bringing with it the taste and smell of snow. Morning sun and cold temperatures had quickly been replaced with gunmetal gray skies and the promise of an even colder afternoon. It was a day to stay home and cogitate in front of the fire with a good book, a cup of coffee, and a warm blanket. Unfortunately, my journey was carrying me in the opposite direction from these simple luxuries.

The craggy peaks of snow capped mountains filled my windshield with beauty, so I decided to stop for a rest and enjoy the scenery in a small town just off the interstate. Driving through the narrow streets, I noticed a weather worn sign that stated simply: Guns-Buy-Sale-Trade. I angled my truck into the parking lot and decided to see what they had to offer.

If first impressions mean anything, my chances of finding something interesting were less than zero. The front of the building was in an advanced state of disrepair so chances were the inside was not much better. Pushing open the heavy door I stepped into the shop. The interior was not much larger than an ordinary one-car garage, but in contrast to the outside, it was clean and neat.



A man in his early fifties, wearing overalls and a ball cap greeted me. He emanated the appearance of someone who preferred others to assume he was not overly intelligent, when in fact he was very capable and shrewd.

Sixgunner's Dream

Long gun racks filled with a little bit of everything lined the walls. Wooden shelves underneath held ammunition in practically any caliber you could imagine. Four or five steps carried me in front of his handgun counters. To my surprise, I had wandered into a sixgunner's dream.

The first counter held a mixture of Colt New Service, old Detective Specials, Pythons, one Banker's Special, and one as-new Official Police. Counter two was filled with a variety of large-frame S&Ws and old model Ruger single actions. Counter three quite obviously held a variety of handguns the old gentleman deemed not worthy to include with the others.

As I walked back to the first counter to examine one of the New Service Colts, a voice interrupted.

"Over here, come back!"

Thinking the salesman was speaking to me, I asked, "Did

you say something sir?" "No," he replied as he glanced up from his newspaper, "but if you need anything, just let me know." Dismissing the voice, I continued looking at the husky Colt through the glass.

"Come over here. I'm in the last counter. Hurry!"

The salesman continued to read his paper, so clearly he had not said a word. Thinking I was losing my mind, I walked over to the last counter and looked in. Nothing unusual stared back at me.

"I'm the S&W Model 28, lying beside the old Iver Johnson."

Shaking my head with disbelief, and glancing around to assure myself no one was watching, I replied softly, "Look, I'm not crazy. Six-guns can definitely not talk, so what's going on here?" By now, I'm sure you hold the opinion that yours truly has lost his mind, or is at least telling one of the biggest lies of the century, but it really did happen just as described.

"I've been stuck in this counter for over a year waiting for someone to carry me home. Everybody picks me up and checks me out, but no one wants me. I know I'm not much to look at — I've got a few scratches and scars — but I shoot pretty good, and I have lots of life left. I'm rugged,



dependable, and to be frank, we deserve each other. Buy me and let's go home."

By now, *I'm* pretty sure I've lost my mind. The old man behind the counter was still absorbed in his paper, so he had not heard me speak to the Smith. If I was destined to hear a handgun talk, why couldn't the voice have emanated from one of those crisp New Service Colts, or better still, something custom made, or engraved? Why did it have to be a trail worn S&W Model 28?

"Alright, I'll buy you, but you better be as good as you say, or I'll trade you off so fast it will bulge your chambers." I pulled the old man away from his paper long enough to conduct the transaction. It was obvious by his manner that he considered me crazy for buying the worn Smith, instead of one of his better handguns, but I had no other option. How often does a firearm talk to you?

Good As His Word

We often lovingly refer to handguns as she, her, or perhaps my baby. This 'Smith considers itself a he, and is quick to correct you should you make a mistake. Whatever it is, my Smith Model 28 was true to his word. He is rugged, dependable, and shoots very well indeed. While not a tack driver, or target gun, he does manage to group everything under two inches at 25 yards.

Neither is he picky about what he's fed. Stuff the chambers with a combination of factory and handloaded .38 special and .357 Magnum ammunition, and he'll still group under two inches. My 'Smith is not much to look at, but he possesses the qualities everyone desires in a faithful friend — he's rugged, reliable, never lets you down and he's a straight shooter. What more could you ask?

Police officers, county sheriffs, and highway patrolman enjoyed a strong, healthy relationship with the original S&W .357 Magnum six-gun. Gangsters and outlaws soon learned the hard way, that one well placed shot from an

officer's .357 magnum administered justice swiftly and often permanently.

As popular as the S&W .357 Magnum was, it had one disadvantage small town departments could not overlook. It was expensive. Police department budgets were small, and town coffers often ran dry, so lawmen, being the crafty lot they are, solved their dilemma themselves.

Agencies from across the country, including the Texas Highway Patrol, contacted S&W asking them to produce a less expensive version of its famous .357 Magnum revolver. The original .357 (later known as the Model 27) was dressed in high polished blue, and wore such adornments as cut checkering on the top strap and barrel rib, plus fancy target stocks. These time consuming features did not come cheap.

Ready To Oblige

Smith & Wesson has always left the door open for officers, inviting ideas to improve its products and make them more user friendly for the men and women in blue. Listening closely to what they wanted, C.R. Hellstrom, then president of S&W, instructed his team of engineers to design a revolver that would answer these requests.

The result, with all due respect to Bill Jordan and the Combat Magnum, was a police officer's dream gun. Christened the Highway Patrolman, this new six-gun enjoyed all of the inherent qualities of the original .357 magnum revolver — strength, ruggedness, durability and target-grade accuracy; but at a price town council bean counters found attractive.

To make this new six-gun affordable, Smith engineers did away with the high-polished bluing, and instead applied a durable matte or brush blue finish. These veteran revolvers actually wear a finish that is far more attractive than many produced by Smith and Wesson today. Top strap checkering was dropped, and modest service stocks replaced the expen-

“HIKERS, FISHERMEN, CAMPERS, AND WOODS-BUMMERS, ENJOYED AN ENDURING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE MODEL 28. THIS RUGGED S&W SIX-GUN OFFERED PROTECTION AGAINST TWO- AND FOUR-LEGGED CAMP ROBBERS”

sive target grips. These simple alterations allowed every officer who so desired to be armed with one of the finest six-guns ever to be worn on a Sam Browne belt.

Not Just For Those In Uniform

The Model 28 quickly found favor with hunters and outdoorsmen as well as peace officers. Its large frame could digest heavy handloads without heartburn while providing ample velocity and power for most medium and all small game.

Hikers, fishermen, campers, and woods-bummers, enjoyed an enduring relationship with the Model 28. This rugged S&W six-gun offered protection against two- and four-legged camp robbers, and tucked under a pillow, provided the peace of mind necessary for a good night's sleep.

As fine as this revolver is, it has been absent from the S&W catalog for many a year. It happened about the same time Americans became weight conscious, and decided trimming a few pounds here and there made them look better. Advancements in metallurgy allowed handguns to follow suit, dropping ounces instead of pounds.

Almost overnight, big-boned, N-frame six-guns like

the Model 28 found themselves out of vogue, replaced by underweight versions sporting a slimmer and trimmer body. Knowledgeable shootists realize the value of a large-frame revolver and have mourned the loss of this full figured six-gun ever since.

The Highway Patrolman has been characterized as the workingman's revolver. These blue-collar six-guns could be found riding the range tending cattle, riding shotgun in the glove compartment of a long haul truck driver, in the back pocket of a gas station attendant or shoved discreetly into a desk drawer or night stand. Anyone who so desired could afford this rugged, rawboned, six-gun. Affordable, durable, and you got more than your money's worth — American simplicity at its best.

Custom Gun Starting Point?

Today, many shooters find the 'Smith Model 28 the perfect basic revolver for their custom gun projects. Prices have not risen enormously since their factory demise, and locating fine examples at shops and trade shows is a relatively simple task. This advantage makes it possible to start your project with a six-gun whose foundation is already in



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Custom gunsmiths around the country stay busy refining these rugged handguns into classic works of art, from simple cartridge conversions, to time consuming and costly engraved masterpieces.

A few months ago, I phoned Dave Clements, of Clements Custom Guns, and asked him about the possibility of converting my Model 28 from .357 Magnum to .44 Special. As soon as we concluded our conversation, I received a thorough, and sound tongue, or maybe it was a barrel lashing. In very clear and concise terms, my talkative Smith informed me he was perfectly happy just the way he was, and for some reason, I then felt guilty for having entertained the thought of changing him.

The S&W Model 28 was produced from 1954 through 1986. Finish was blue with a very small number of brushed nickle versions produced. Barrel lengths were either 4 or 6 inches. The 24th edition *Blue Book* shows a value of \$325 for a new condition sample.

Old Friends Are Good Friends

We often have rather one-sided conversations, this old S&W and I. I'm a good listener, and he soon felt confident enough to tell me his life's story. When I first met him, he mentioned we deserved each other. He was correct. We share some of the same traits, both good and bad. We are both a bit trail-worn and rough around the edges, obstinate at times, and often cranky.

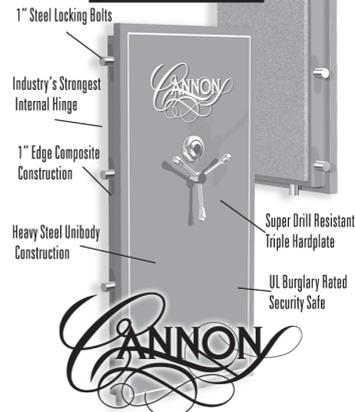
He's showing his age, as am I, but hopefully we can both share a few more adventures and smell the heady aroma of burnt gunpowder before his chambers need a bypass, and my legs and back give out.

Since my encounter with this particular Model 28, I've enjoyed a newfound respect for these venerable six-guns. Durable, rugged, dependable, and accurate — that's a pretty apt description of a S&W Highway Patrolman. They look pretty darn good too. What more can you say? Well actually, you don't have to say anything, he'll do the talking for you.



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Nine Millimeter or .45 ACP? It's one of the many inane questions that are bantered about continuously and almost religiously. It seems when it comes to handguns, if you can profess it, people will be petty enough to argue about it. Whether we're discussing the virtues of sub-sonic versus +P+, ball versus frangible, .357 SIG versus .40 S&W, or moderate versus deep penetration in ordnance gelatin — you're bound to turn brother against brother and divide households.

Delve below the surface into doctrinal issues such as what stance you use or the merits of using the sights at conversational distances, and you'll bring forth a flurry of carefully worded, and fully supported, theological dissertations ready to be nailed to the opposing faction's door. Handgun fundamentalists are funny that way, they tend to dogmatically oppose one another's views rather than learning from them. It's almost amusing when you consider that no one with any horse sense brings a handgun to a gunfight.

At the other end of the spectrum is the mundane 12-gauge pump shotgun. While largely unchanged for over 100 years, the simple 12-gauge pump remains both highly popular and brutally effective for self-defense. No one argues with its anti-personnel abilities when deployed at very short

ranges with buckshot or slugs. While certainly not in the realm of Old Testament fire and brimstone as some would have us believe, it's also true that at close range, stopping power is simply not an issue.

In a law enforcement role, its ability to accept a range of specialized munitions makes it a flexible system capable of handling diverse scenarios. While by no means perfect (what is?), the venerable 12-gauge pump does offer the essentials — ease of use, reliability and dependable stopping power.

H&K's Choice

One relative newcomer to this field is the FP6 imported and distributed by Heckler & Koch. Manufactured by Fabbrica Bresciana Armi S.p.A. (FABARM) of Italy, the FP6 and its semi-auto sibling, the Tactical Semi-Auto, fill the void that appeared in H&K's line-up when Benelli struck out on their own.

A well-respected Old World manufacturer, FABARM has an impressive line-up of SxS, O/U, pump, semi-auto, and single-shot sporting and competition shotguns. In addition to their handsome sporting guns FABARM also produces a line of tactical shotguns that look right at home next to H&K's best.

PUMPING LEAD WITH THE FABARM FP6

STORY BY DAVID M. FORTIER

PHOTOS BY EMILY K. FORTIER

EY SWEEPER





Hand-Picked Writer's Sample

I was interested in learning how the Italian FP6 would stack up when compared to American designs. To find out I requested an FP6 with 20-inch barrel, ventilated barrel shroud, and carbon fiber finish from H&K. Unfortunately what arrived was not quite what I requested or expected.

The furnished sample arrived without the carbon fiber finish, but with a picatinny rail and a folding front sight assembly. Even better, it looked like it had been dragged behind a pick-up truck for a week or two. This thing was pounded!

The best part though was the front sight had been sheared completely off. Nice eh? And to think some whine that gun writers receive only hand selected, pick-of-the-litter samples to test. Anyway, it went back and after some fuss we received what we had asked for.

Light, Simple, Handy

When the FP6 finally arrived, we noted it is a relatively conventional, manually operated slide-action repeating 12-gauge shotgun. The heart of the weapon is its Ergal 55 alloy receiver. This is light yet strong. Inside the receiver rides an extremely simple bolt assembly. Lock-up is via a rising block that engages a cut-out in the steel barrel extension.

The bolt incorporates a spring loaded firing pin, which retains the rising block, and a spring loaded extractor. To disassemble the entire bolt one need only push out two pins and it comes right apart. The bolt sits atop a block connected to dual forged action bars. Dual action bars of course can offer advantages over systems utilizing a single-action bar, such as a smoother operation with less chance of binding.

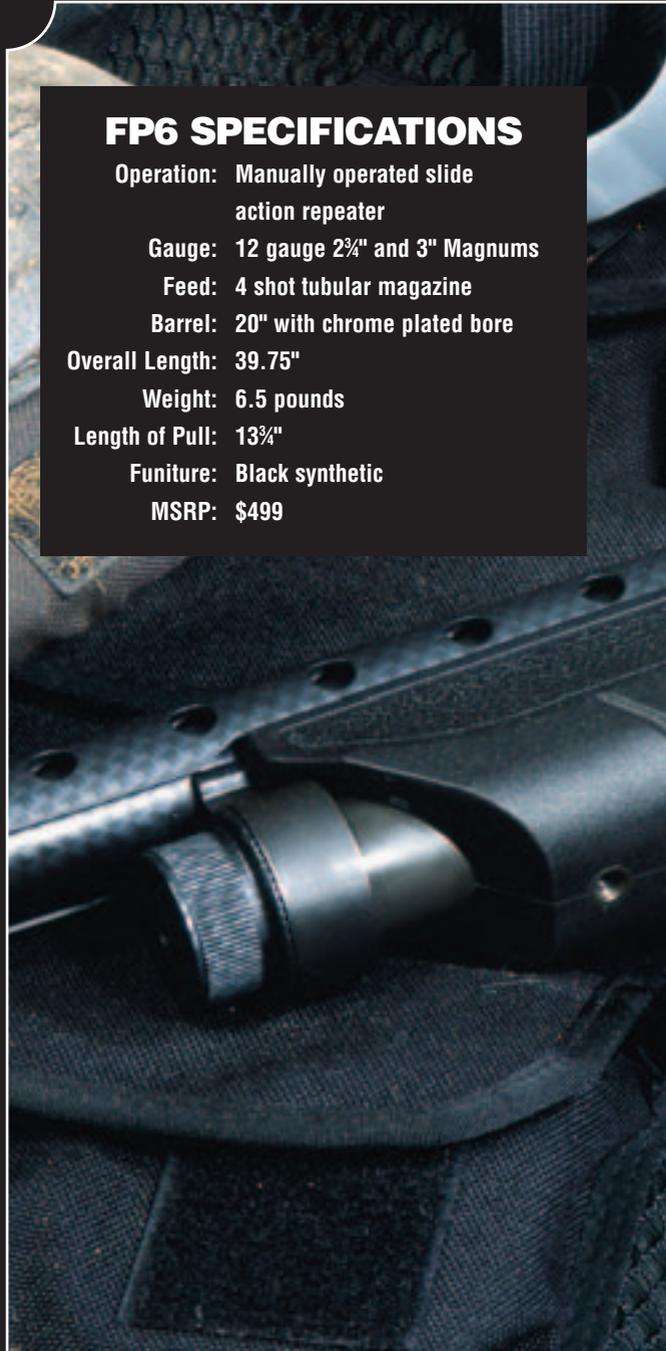
Beneath the receiver one finds the trigger assembly protected by a synthetic triggerguard. Behind the chrome plated trigger is a push-button safety. This is in the shape of an inverted triangle and is oversized to aid quick manipulation. At the front of the triggerguard is the slide release. This is a piece of stamped, chrome-plated sheet metal. To the front of this is a chrome plated shell carrier.

Mated to the front of the receiver is a 20-inch long barrel chambered for 3-inch Magnums. This tube features FABARM's patented TriBore barrel system. FABARM produces their barrels via deep drilling of barrel stock on CNC machinery. Rather than simply punching a straight hole down the center of the tube, FABARM machines three distinct internal bore profiles.

The first of these starts just in front of the chamber and forcing cone. It enlarges the bore to a diameter of .7401 inch with the inten-

FP6 SPECIFICATIONS

- Operation:** Manually operated slide action repeater
- Gauge:** 12 gauge 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " and 3" Magnums
- Feed:** 4 shot tubular magazine
- Barrel:** 20" with chrome plated bore
- Overall Length:** 39.75"
- Weight:** 6.5 pounds
- Length of Pull:** 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
- Furniture:** Black synthetic
- MSRP:** \$499



SLUG ACCURACY RESULTS

Load	Velocity	50 Yards
Federal 1 oz. Tactical	1,163 fps	2 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
Winchester 1 oz. Ranger	1,149 fps	3"
Wolf 1 oz. Power Slug	1,375 fps	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Velocity readings taken 12' from the muzzle at an ambient temperature of 80 degrees F. Groups are an average of three, 3-shot groups fired from the bench at 50 yards.



tion of softening recoil without sacrificing velocity. The second bore is located in the middle of the barrel. This gradually chokes down to .7244 inch, duplicating a cylinder bore profile, which increases velocity. The third bore is FABARM's choke system. This consists of standard choking followed by a cylinder profile at the muzzle. This is intended to aid shot distribution and improve patterns.

The overall result, FABARM claims, is high velocity, superior patterns, and low felt recoil. In addition the barrel bore is hard-chrome plated for resistance to corrosion.

Racy Looking, But Needed?

Our FP6 featured a full-length steel barrel shroud ventilated with 56 holes. While it's doubtful you would ever overheat a 12-gauge pump in a self-defense situation, it is relatively easy to do during energetic practice. So the shroud is a useful feature designed to prevent an operator from burning himself on an overheated barrel.

The barrel's muzzle has external threads to allow external chokes to be mounted, although none were included. Sights consist of a very small front post and the usual groove in the receiver. Beneath the barrel is a conventional 5-shot tubular magazine with a bright orange shell follower. This is surrounded by a black synthetic handguard almost 12-inches in length. The bottom forward edge of this is drilled to accept an accessory rail.

The buttstock is a black synthetic unit with a 13.75-inch length of pull. A soft rubber recoil pad is mounted and a sling swivel is located under the pistolgrip. Finish is an attractive matte gray/black that resembles carbon fiber.

This is without a doubt a fighting shotgun and not intended for upland game hunting. So that's how I evaluated it. During testing I was interested in checking the FP6's fit and finish, handling, and controllability as well as its performance with a variety of loads. To this end it was shot extensively with birdshot, buckshot and slugs on both static and moving targets. I had assistance in this task from a U.S. Coast Guard Boarding Officer/Weapons Instructor and a Weapons Instructor from a South Carolina penitentiary.

Fine Points

The FP6 arrived in a hard plastic case with the obligatory instruction manual. Out of the box, the Italian smoothbore looked good. It has very pleasing lines and the carbon fiber finish is quite attractive. Pawing it over I was impressed with the overall quality of the weapon. It strikes you as well made and the H&K logo does not look out of place on it.

If I were to nit-pick here, I could only say that the pad could have been fit a mite nicer to the butt, and a machined component would have looked nicer than the stamped

slide release. That's it though. The action, even dry, cycled smoothly and the trigger was light with no appreciable creep. I liked the long forend as it allows an operator to move his hand back closer to the weapon's action. This will be appreciated by anyone of smaller build or with shorter arms.

The safety on my review gun was easily manipulated, although I have handled other FP6s where this was not the case. The weapon shouldered easily, but the tiny front sight was very difficult to pick-up. In the hands the weapon felt lively with an overall length of 39.75 inches and an unloaded weight of approximately 6.5 pounds.

Shotshell Buffet

To test the FP6 I utilized a large quantity of 12-gauge ammunition from Wolf Performance Ammunition, Winchester, and Federal. Wolf Performance Ammunition is well known for their inexpensive handgun and rifle ammunition, but they've recently added shotshells to their line-up. So I utilized their 9 pellet, "00" buck Power Buckshot load, their 1-ounce Power Slug load, and their Dove and Quail birdshot load. This latter load is a 3/4-Dram equivalent load throwing 1-ounce of No. 7 1/2 shot.

In addition to trying the new Wolf loads I used some old favorites consisting of Winchester's Ranger line of low-recoil law enforcement ammunition. Here I utilized the

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GUNS MAGAZINE

9-pellet "00" buck and 1-ounce slug loads. From Federal I chose the LE Tactical 9-pellet "00" buck and 1-ounce Hydra-Shok HP slug. I felt this variety of ammunition would provide a good indication of how the FP6 handled and performed.

To begin testing I grouped the three slug loads at 50 yards from the bench using a Wichita rest and rear bunny bag. This was most enjoyable with a nice "smack" to the shoulder with every squeeze of the trigger. Accuracy was quite acceptable, with Wolf averaging 3 shots into 2.5 inches, Federal into 2½ inches and Winchester into 3 inches. Point of impact was about 8 inches below point of aim and slightly to the left.

If you know the correction (and this is a big if) this gun is sufficiently accurate for head shots at 50 yards. As an example, I put five Wolf Power Slugs into the head of an IPSC target at 50 yards, and the resulting group measured 4¾ inches center to center.

Merit Of Testing

Switching to "00" buck I patterned the FP6 from the bench at 25 yards. Here results were not as impressive as with slugs. Shooting at standard IPSC targets the FP6 would only keep 6 out of 9 pellets on paper consistently with the Wolf load, and 7 out of 9 with the Winchester load. Results with Federal's Tactical load were much better with all 9 pellets staying in a 15-inch circle

at 25 yards. This is good performance and shows the importance of testing a variety of loads to secure the best match to your particular shotgun. We did note that Wolf's buckshot load really rocked off the bench as it pounded out of the 6.5-pound FP6.

Leaving the bench, we got to work to see how the FP6 performed in the real world. To do this we began by engaging hand thrown clay birds with Wolf's Dove and Quail load. Multiple targets were put into the air at a rapid pace to get a feel for how the FP6 shouldered, swung, cycled, and reloaded. Two people throwing at the same time added pressure as the FP6 hammered out lead. You can learn a lot about a combat shotgun from shooting skeet.

We started from the low ready with the safety engaged. When the clay birds suddenly loomed into view the shooter would shoulder, disengage the safety and rapidly engage both birds. By the time the first two went down two more were in the air. The shooter stuffed more shells into the tube at any pause as more birds were soon on the way. The action was fast and furious here with the FP6 doing fairly well.

On The Move

From shooting clay birds we moved to running "jungle lanes" using buckshot and slugs. Multiple steel silhouettes were engaged in rapid succession while on the move from 10 to 100 yards. Multiple

reloads, often on the move, were the rule here. This gave us a chance to evaluate the FP6's handling and controllability with buck and slugs.

Here we noticed a drastic difference between the "low recoil" LE loads and the full house Wolf loads. The inexpensive Wolf buck and slugs really jumped in the light pumpgun. Also we noted that since the Wolf loads are roll crimped their unfired overall length is slightly longer. This limited the FP6's capacity to a mere four shells in the tube. With any of the loads the small capacity tube magazine required continual topping off. Runs were made using solely buckshot, slugs, and a combination of both. In addition the FP6 was deployed from both shoulders. When the smoke cleared we had a pretty good feel for the FP6.

Bouquets And Brick Bats

On the good side the FP6 is lightweight, fairly short, and quick handling. The action is smooth and easy to manipulate allowing a rapid rate of fire. Rounds load easily into the magazine tube with a simple push. The buttstock and forend are robust, nicely shaped, and provide a secure purchase. The recoil pad is nicely contoured to allow a quick mount, keeps the weapon in place once mounted, and softens recoil.

The barrel shroud looks "wicked good" while keeping the operator from burning his

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digits off. The two things I liked best about the FP6 were its flawless reliability during testing, and the ease with which it strips. It comes apart for cleaning as quickly as Kalashnikov's *Avtomat*.

However, in my humble opinion, all was not perfect with the FP6. First off the front sight would be a poor joke on a sporting shotgun. On a weapon designed for life and death struggles from conversational distances to 50 yards — it's a crime. At the very least it should have a large, easy to see brass bead. Better yet would be a Tritium front sight.

My second complaint is the safety, which I would prefer to have centrally located on the tang. Such placement would allow far easier deployment from either shoulder. Third, I'm not much on plastic sling swivels and would prefer a steel unit. Fourth, a 5-shot magazine on a 20-inch barreled combat shotgun is, well, stupid. The gun should come standard with the magazine tube extension that H&K offers, but (despite requests) did not send for testing. Lastly, due to its light weight, recoil is rather snappy.

Shot to shot controllability was acceptable with the low recoil LE loads but suffered when the gun was stuffed with the full house loads from Wolf. All who shot it commented on both its recoil and muzzle rise. I'll end my rant here, remember nothing man made is perfect.

Final verdict? The FP6 from FABARM and H&K is a simple and reliable 12-gauge pump shotgun. It functions well and looks good while doing it. That being said it really doesn't offer anything over a Mossberg 500, or even an 1897 Winchester for that matter, except a well respected German brand name stenciled handsomely on the side. If such things are of importance to you then by all means indulge.



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WALTHER CP99

continued from page 30

tridge yielded close to 60 shots before it had to be replaced, a big plus in a plinking pistol that's bound to see lots of use.

It was quickly discovered that the CP99, like the original, is a natural pointer in the hand and has superb balance to boot. All that, plus its finely rifled .177 caliber barrel, contribute a lot to this pistol's terrific precision. Both CP99 samples tested initially printed groups averaging 1 3/4 inch at ten yards. This is creditable indeed for a general-purpose training/plinking pellet pistol.

High-Speed Version

A third test sample, dubbed the CP99 "Trophy," incorporating a red-dot sight, revealed just how much fun one of these superb pellet plinkers can be. All sorts of impromptu small objects were bounced around in both slow and rapid fire with the trio of CP99s on test.

The Walther CP99 comes in a choice of finishes. There is an all-black version, as well as one with a black frame and satin-nickel slide. A third version sports a military-green frame with a black slide. All versions come in a padded hard plastic case that includes a spare rotary magazine (additional magazines can be purchased separately) extra backstrap, and a comprehensive owner's manual in four languages, including English.

In addition, the aforementioned "Trophy" version comes in a fitted hard case and sports a superb electronic red-dot sight on a removable bridge mount attached to the frame rails ahead of the trigger guard.

At the time of this writing, a fourth version of the CP99, dubbed the CP Sport, is about to be introduced, ostensibly intended for young shooters. This Sport version features double-action only operation and will be available with the molded frames in a choice of colors such as yellow, orange and black. 

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LEVERGUN LOADS

continued from page 46

Life is full of trade-offs, and one can have a heavy rifle to combat felt recoil, or a light-weight rifle that is easy to carry. For hunting certainly most of us would choose the latter option, and the Model 94 has always been recognized as one of the easiest rifles to pack in the woods, and perfect for carrying in a saddle scabbard or pickup truck rack.

Perhaps, these good cartridges would have survived in a rifle better suited for scope use, as most users of the trim saddle gun that is the Model 94 prefer to use open sights or receiver sights. Both cartridges will outshoot iron sights. Perhaps, gun writers of the time were not enthusiastic enough about old-fashioned leverguns. Perhaps. Whatever the reason, it is our loss that these lever guns are no longer offered.

Very Nicely Executed

It could easily be argued that the Big Bore Model 94 represents Winchester's finest effort in the Model 94 series at least in my lifetime. Both my Big Bore .375 and .356 were found on the used gun rack at Shapel's and purchased for less than the cost of an everyday run-of-the-mill .30-30. In fact the total cost for both was less than the price for one scoped bolt action rifle. I do love bargains!

They are beautiful rifles with deep bluing, checkered forearm and buttstock, and just a slight telltale bulge on each side of the back of

the receiver that says these rifles are stronger than the ordinary Model 94. The Big Bore models are pre-rebounding hammer versions without the pushbutton safeties found on all current lever guns. Both rifles are specially marked. The .375 features "BIG BORE MODEL 94 XTR-375 WIN" on the left side of the barrel. However, the .356 is inscribed "MODEL 94AE XTR CAL 356 WIN."

Barrels are somewhat different, as the .356 is much slimmer in profile than the .375. The .375 features the old-style, top ejection of fired cases, while the .356 tosses its brass off to the right. For me at least there is something comforting or maybe spiritually traditional about a Winchester that throws its brass straight up as they have always done since the 1860 Henry. There is a lot to be said for the "don't fix what ain't broke" philosophy. Millions upon millions of traditional ejecting Winchesters have been sold so there must be something comfortably right about them.

Receiver Sight Perfect

Both rifles have the traditional fold down rear sight mated up with a bead front sight on a ramp. The .375 Winchester has a traditional Model 94 butt stock. In contrast, the .356 was obviously designed to be used with a scope as it came drilled and tapped for a scope base, and the butt stock has a cheekpiece.

However it is they were intended to be used, I treat both of them the same as they

have both been fitted with Williams receiver sights. For my use, they are for deep woods, brush, or up close hunting on critters that look a little large and/or a little mean to allow 100 percent confidence in the .30-30. They both fulfill this role admirably.

Top Notch Performance

How do these cartridges, the .375 Winchester and the .356 Winchester, and for that matter the .307 Winchester stack up against their counterparts? The factory loaded versions of the .375 Winchester are 200- and 250-grain JSPs that clock out of the 20-inch Big Bore Model 94 at 2,121 fps and 1,843 fps respectively. Compare this to the current factory loaded 255-grain .38-55 that just barely tops 1,200 fps from a 24-inch barrel.

The .356 Winchester is loaded by the factory with a 250-grain flat point that travels over the Oehler Model 35P at 1,881 fps. By comparison the factory-loaded .358 Winchester fired from the longer barreled Winchester Model 88 clocks out at 2,250 fps with the same weight bullet. The factory-loaded .307 Winchester is rated at 2,760 fps with a 150-grain jacketed bullet, which means the .308 Win. only shades it by 60 fps.

For reloading the .356 Winchester and the .375 Winchester, I use Lee dies in the RCBS Rockchucker reloading press. Since the .375 is basically a straight walled cartridge, Lee supplies a three die set, while the dies for the .356 Winchester are the two die

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set common to bottlenecked cartridges. All cases are sprayed with Midway's spray on lube, full-length re-sized, and then primed with CCI's No. 200 large rifle primers using the RCBS priming tool.

Favorite Bullets And Loads

Being a straight walled cartridge and descended from the .38-55 Winchester, the .375 Winchester is a natural for use with cast bullets. Two excellent two-cavity molds, whether bullets are to be used in the .38-55 or .375, are the Lyman No. 375449 and the RCBS No. 37-250FN. Both are gas check designs, drop from the mold at approximately 250 grains, and are sized to .375-inch for use in the .375 Winchester.

Two favorite loads, both assembled with the Lyman bullet, are 16.0-grains of Accurate Arms XMP5744 to basically duplicate the old .38-55 black powder load. It generates an easy shooting 1,121 fps from the 20-inch Big Bore .375. For a full-power hunting load, 30.0-grains of Alliant's Reloder 7 clocks just a shade under 2,000 fps.

Since the Model 94 features a tubular magazine, only flat point bullets should be used in the .375 Winchester. Both the Hornady 220-grain and Sierra 200-grain flat points work exceptionally well. Favorite loads include 36.0-grains H4198 for 2,200 fps with Sierra's 200-grain flat point, and 36.0-grains of Hodgdon's H322 for 2,040 fps with Hornady's 220-grain version.

For the .356 Winchester, my flat-nosed bullets of choice are both from Speer. The 180-grain FN is loaded over 48.0-grains of Hodgdon's H335 for 2,550 fps, while the heavier 220-grain FN is propelled at 2,405 fps with 46.0-grains of the same propellant. This is a great powder for use in the .356 Winchester, however, these loads should not be taken for granted. As always, work carefully up to these loads in your particular rifle, looking for signs of excess pressure.

Important Caution

I do use round-nosed bullets in the .356 Winchester. However, when I do, it becomes a lever action "double barrel." That is I load only two rounds so there is no danger of a round nosed bullet tip pounding against the primer of a cartridge in front of it in the magazine tube and possibly causing it to fire in recoil. *Never load more than two rounds of round-nosed or spire point bullets in a lever action rifle where the possibility of recoil setting off a round exists.*

With these round nose bullets, two exceptionally good shooting loads for the .356 Winchester are the Hornady 200-grain RN over 46.0-grains of H335 for 2,360 fps, and 37.0-grains Reloder 7 with Sierra's 200-grain RN for 2,191 fps. If I could choose only one powder for use with the .356 Winchester it would be Hodgdon's H335.

Both the .375 Winchester and the .356 Winchester chambered in the Big Bore Model 94 are excellent cartridges for hunting big game, certainly for anything in the lower 48. They also work well in handguns, and I have shot both extensively in the T/C Contender in the case of the .375, while the .356 resides in Rock Pistol Manufacturing's RPM single-shot. Both versions have very much appreciated muzzle brakes.

The .375 Winchester and the .356 Winchester are both long gone from new-production leverguns. They were an attempt to bridge the gap between the traditions of yesteryear and the ballistic performance of today. Their lackluster success had nothing to do with lack of performance, and owners of these good rifles today should appreciate and enjoy them.



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IMPROVISED SHOOTING

IN THE FIELD, STABILITY IS WHERE YOU FIND IT.

BY DAVE ANDERSON

The two mule deer bucks were restless. They were slowly drifting north along a half-mile wide valley, stopping now and then to browse but never settling down. For two hours my wife Simone and I had been trying to get within range.

From the rim of the valley we would follow their progress with binoculars until it seemed they had stopped. Then we'd slip back out of sight, make a big circle, and creep up to the rim above where we'd last seen them. Twice we tried this and twice they moved on while we were circling.

The third time we resolved to get well ahead and let them come to us. We were nearly to the rim when one of the bucks trotted out of a little draw that led into the valley, across the flat on top and headed for the next draw, hustling along as though late for an appointment. But where was the other one?

We kept crawling to the valley rim. No buck was in sight. To the left, though, the valley curved away behind a ridge, leaving a big area we couldn't see. Part of the rim had fallen away, leaving a jagged bite just the right size to provide cover while checking out the unseen area. I dropped into the little notch, slipped my left arm through the shooting sling and peeked around the corner.

The buck was there, facing to my right and quartering away. I took a step around the corner and leaned into the hill, sling tight and elbow braced against solid earth. The sight picture looked just right as the trigger broke. The 140-grain Barnes XLC bullet from my .280 Rem. struck behind the ribs on the right side, traversed the chest cavity and exited just under the left shoulder blade. The buck ran about 20 yards and was down and dead within seconds.

Nothing Succeeds Like Success

The range wasn't particularly long (230 yards by GPS) but the buck was edgy, ready

to move, and the shot had to be taken quickly. Maybe I could have whittled him down from offhand. But a couple seconds spent slipping into the sling and stepping into a solid shooting position made a clean, one shot kill virtually certain.

Earlier in the day we had noticed two orange-clad hunters a mile or two away, hunting along another valley. We were dressing out the buck when from the direction of the other hunters came the report of a rifle. Then another shot, and another, 14 shots in all. At first the shots were in rapid succession, then more widely spaced as the shooters evidently emptied their magazines and began loading single rounds.

I don't know how they made out. For all I know they may have ambushed a pack of coyotes and stacked them up like so much cordwood. But my guess is they stumbled across some deer, opened up offhand and kept firing as long as there was something in sight. If asked why they didn't sit down to shoot, or find a handy rock or tree to use as a rest, they'd probably say there wasn't time. Yet there was time to fire 14 rounds.

It Takes Only Seconds

A competent rifleman should be capable of shooting offhand. Nonetheless it should only be on the rarest occasions an offhand shot is necessary in the hunting field. Almost always there is time to assume a steadier position or take advantage of an improvised shooting support.

Using an improvised rest or more stable shooting position isn't necessarily slow, quite the contrary. It may take a few seconds to acquire a solid shooting position. But once settled into position with the sight picture steady, the shot itself can be taken quickly. In the case of the mule deer, I'm sure it took no more than three seconds from sighting the deer to

breaking the shot.

An offhand shot would have been faster. But a first-shot, offhand hit on a 6-inch target at 230 yards, guaranteed, in three seconds? I don't think so.

When maximum accuracy is the goal, as in rifle and ammunition testing, we use a benchrest. The benchrest does the best job possible of keeping the rifle steady, and steadiness is one of the fundamentals of accurate shooting.

It would be handy if benchrests were conveniently available in hunting country. In a way they are. A benchrest, after all, is simply a convenient, comfortable way of connecting rifle and shooter to good solid mother earth. While the "benchrests" found in the field aren't as comfortable and convenient they can be every bit as solid. All they require from the shooter is a bit of imagination and adaptability.

Plan In Advance

Making use of these unconventional rests is an acquired skill. Part of the process is simply being aware of what's available. All sorts of rests are available; rocks, trees, fallen logs, stumps, fenceposts. More than once I've seen hunters shoot and miss from offhand when a rock or post was just a few steps away.

How can we be sure a rest is available when we need it? That's where some foresight comes into play. Spooking the game into flight and then looking for a handy rest isn't likely to be too effective. We need to think about it in advance. When making a stalk my objective is not so much to get close to the game, but to get to a position from which a certain shot can be taken. Watching over a trail, I'd rather be behind cover that can also serve as a rest than sitting in front of it.

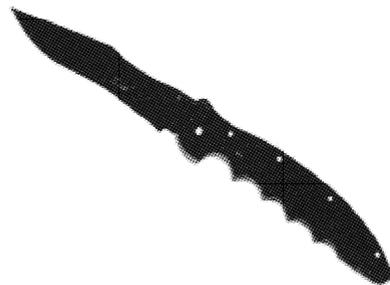
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Gallery Of Good Rests

This certainly one topic for which a picture is worth a thousand words, so let's use the accompanying photos to illustrate some improvised field rests:

Photo No. 1: This is the position from which I made the shot described at the beginning of this article. Leaning against the earth, with the rifle supported by a tight sling, it was easy to hold the crosshairs steady. For reference, the rifle is a Remington 700 Mountain Rifle in .280 Rem., with 3-9X Swarovski scope



Photo No. 2: In agricultural country where I hunt whitetails, farmers move big rocks from their fields to fencelines. They can provide both cover and "rock solid" support. Rifles tend to shoot away from a hard support. Instead of resting the rifle on the rock, I rest it on the left hand, which grasps the sling at the front swivel. It's easy to fine-tune point of aim with the left hand. Recoil pattern of the rifle is similar to when it's on a sandbag rest.



Photo No. 3: Here a rock plus a 5X Stetson provide stability and a soft rest.



Photo No. 4: This handy fallen tree over-looks a well-used game trail, provides cover and a solid shooting rest. Not as steady as a rock, but much steadier than offhand and gets the rifle above the undergrowth.



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Photo No. 5: Kneeling with a fencepost support is much steadier than just kneeling. Note that only the left hand, not the rifle itself, contacts the post. The forearm rests on the web between thumb and forefinger.



Photo No. 6: Standing with a fence support provides almost as much speed, flexibility and mobility as offhand but is much steadier. Rifle rests on the hand, not the fence rail.



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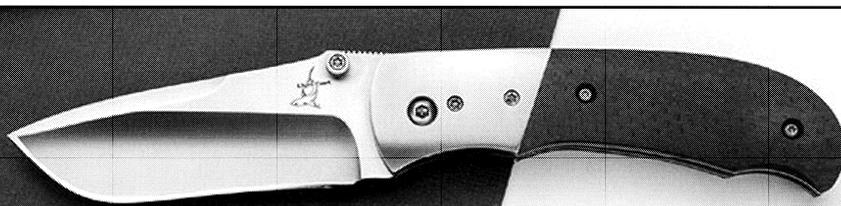
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Photo No. 7: Prone with Stetson forearm rest is nearly as steady as a benchrest. Remember the barrel is an inch or two below line of sight. Before shooting check there isn't a stone, twig, or other obstacle in front of the barrel. Be careful not to crawl the stock and get too close to the scope. I'll use this position with a relatively light-recoiling rifle such as this .284 Win., but likely not with a heavy hitter.

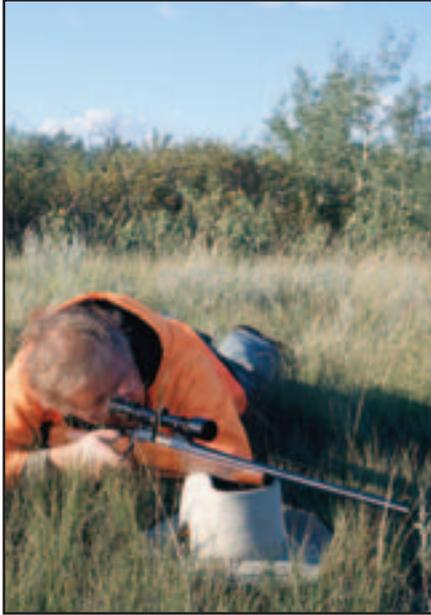


Photo No. 8: Coyote hunting specialists showed me how they use binoculars as a rest. To get enough height the binocular should be fairly tall, such as this 10x42 Pentax. Make sure the front caps are in place to prevent scratched lens. Eyepieces should have rubber covers to provide a softer rest and prevent scratching the rifle. Check there are no obstructions in front of the bore and that eye relief is sufficient to prevent possible scope cuts.



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Photo No. 9: With a bipod such as the popular Harris, shown here on a .257 Weatherby Ultra Lightweight, a rest is always available. With any bipod it's important to check point of impact under the conditions in which it will be used — that is, with the legs resting on the earth, not on a hard shooting bench.



Photo No. 10: Harris also offers a taller bipod, suitable as a support from the sitting position. The only thing I dislike about bipods is the additional weight, and the way they change the balance of the rifle.

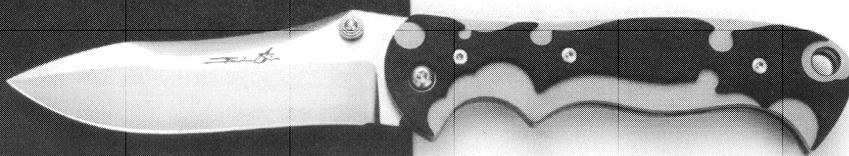


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Photo No. 11: With the Steyr Scout, if you have the rifle you have a bipod. There's a fairly loud click as the legs lock in position so don't wait until the last minute to deploy them. As with other bipods, check point of impact under the conditions you expect to encounter.



An Honest Man

I opened with an example of doing things right. Maybe it's fitting to admit to mistakes as well. On another deer hunt I was overlooking a four- or five-acre patch of willow bush while a hunting partner poked around inside it. I'd seen several does and a buck pop out the other side and trot away across the flat towards other cover.



A few steps away was an erosion ditch about four feet deep which would have given both cover and an improvised rest. But the bottom was muddy. I was sure all the deer were long gone and we were just wasting time. I was standing there disconsolate, rifle slung over a shoulder, about as alert as a dozing penguin.

A nice buck stepped out of the bush maybe 100 yards to my left and posed broadside, just like a picture in a magazine. I think he even had one front leg lifted. I started flailing around getting the rifle off my shoulder. He took off at a dead run and ducked into a little gully before I could fire a shot.

I was watching with binoculars when he popped into view again 600 or 700 yards out. He paused long enough to look back, stick out his tongue, and tilt his head both ways to show off his antlers, then trotted off with an air of smug triumph. Maybe it's my imagination but he even seemed to put a little extra swagger into his gait, rubbing it in. I guess I deserved it.



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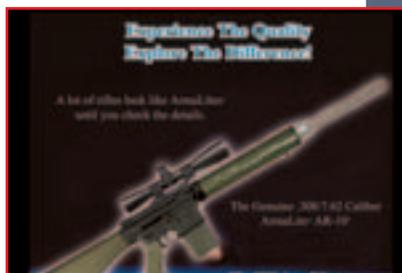
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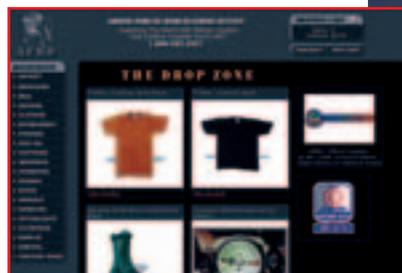
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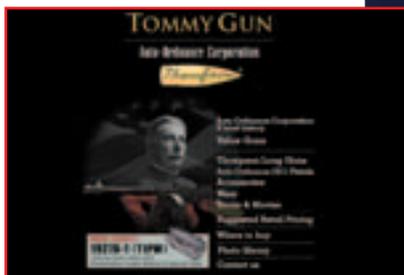
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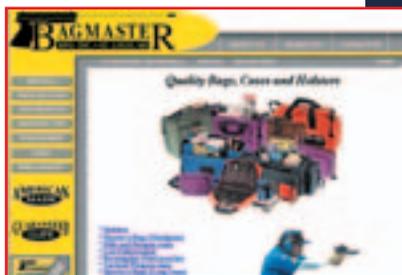
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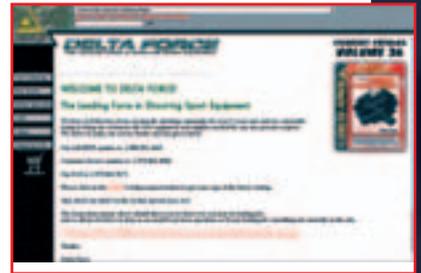
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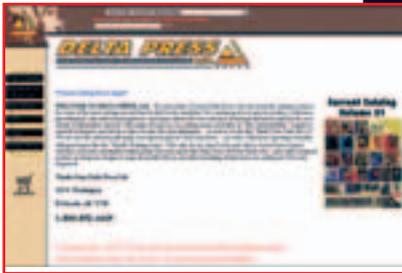
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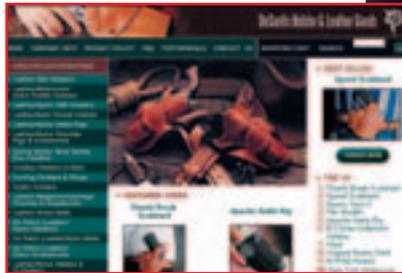
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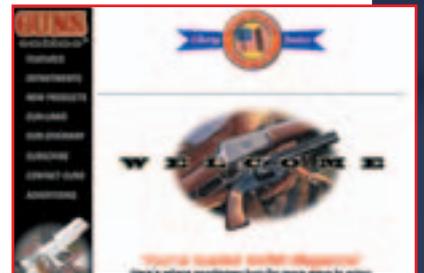
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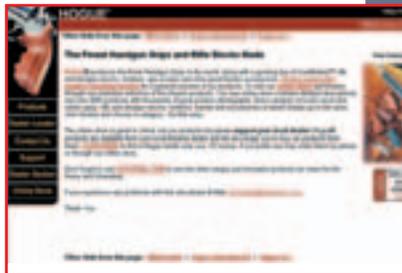
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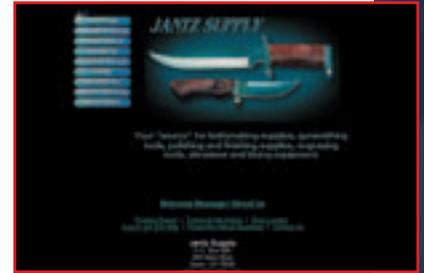
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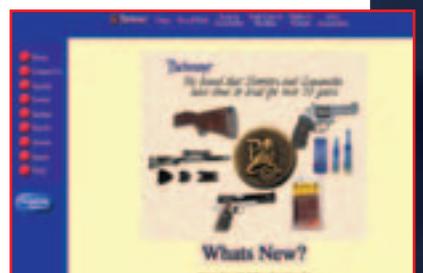
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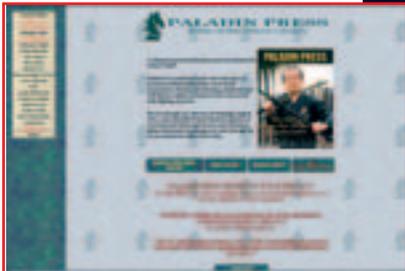
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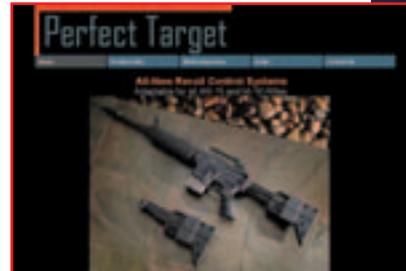
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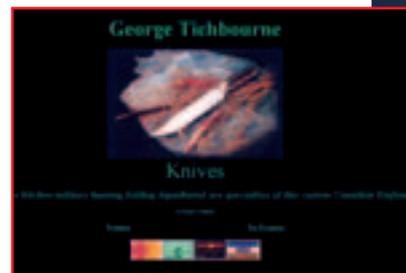
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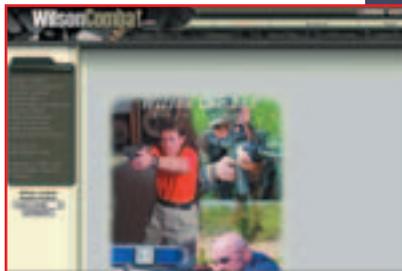
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OUT OF THE BOX

REMINGTON 1100 COMPETITION MASTER

By Charles E. Petty



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Model: M1100 Competition Master
Material: blue steel
Caliber: 12 gauge
Weight: 8 lbs.
Barrel Length: 22"
Capacity: 8+1 rounds
Overall Length: 42½"
Sights: Hi Viz front, steel bead middle
MSRP: \$932

If there has ever been an all-around champ of shotguns it must be the Remington 1100. It was the first widely successful gas-operated semiautomatic shotgun; heck successful isn't even close to being superlative enough. Hugely successful is modest praise.

From its introduction in 1963, it took only nine years to sell a million of them, the second million passed in 1977 and the third in 1983. The basic design has been made in 12, 20 and 28 gauge as well as .410 bore and in configurations for every type of hunting and all the competitive shotgun sports.

Such success is easily understandable. The 1100 was an incredibly durable and reliable shotgun that sold for a very reasonable price. The latest addition to the line is the 1100 Competition Master, which recognizes the growth of shotgun events in three gun or practical competition. Those events need high capacity, fast shooting shotguns. The Remington 1100's gas operation moderates recoil — a real plus when shooting lots of buckshot.

Remington has adapted the basic design to fit the specific demands of this type of shooting. The most notable feature is a magazine tube extending the full length of the 22-inch barrel. A barrel band is needed for support near the muzzle, which also provides an attachment point for a sling swivel. A plain stud is also located in the stock.

The barrel is threaded for Rem-choke tubes and three (improved cylinder, modified and full) are included. Unlike many of today's shotguns which are chambered to accept the 3-inch magnum loads, this one isn't. It holds 8+1 2¾-inch shells only.

The metal wears a bead blasted black finish. The stock and forend are gray synthetic. There's a full-length ventilated rib with a Hi Viz fiber optic front sight. The front sight comes with a series of interchangeable fiber optic inserts allowing a wide choice of colors. The florescent green insert was in the gun when it came. I found it really effective shooting on a cloudy day although it might be a bit much in real bright

sunlight. This thing really gets your attention. But changing it isn't a problem.

Speed shooting events often require fast reloads, so Remington has modified the carrier release a bit to facilitate loading. It's one of those things you'd never notice if they didn't tell you, but

you can tell something is different when you try to load without looking at it. Without taking the gun down from your shoulder it's a snap to stuff shells in the tube. There's also an oversize operating handle which really makes it easy to control the bolt in unloading or clearing a malfunction.

The 1100 Competition Master is equipped with Remington's new R3 recoil pad. This is some very cool, high-tech stuff that makes an incredibly effective pad. It is called R3 because it absorbs, compresses and redirects recoil. It has a combination of new material and internal design that dramatically reduces how you feel the recoil. I was able to do a direct comparison by shooting a pair of Remington Model 700 rifles chambered for the 7mm Ultra Mag. I don't know how to quantify this, but you could sure feel a difference.

One of the great advantages of gas-operated shotguns is the moderating effect the system has on recoil. At 8 pounds, this gun isn't light, but the combination of weight and the new recoil pad make shooting heavy buckshot loads a whole lot more pleasant than normal.

These reports are not intended to be exhaustive tests but they're a lot more than canned stuff from a press release too. The test gun was fired with everything from the lightest skeet loads to some rather hot near magnum loads with 12 pellets of 00 buck. I even tried mixing the two extremes in the magazine. The gun didn't care — it functioned with everything I tried. Even though it is designed for a specific competitive event the Model 1100 Competition Master wouldn't be a bad choice for any defensive role.



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www.remington.com



OUT OF THE BOX

IMI'S INTRIGUING SP-21

By Dick Williams



I'm usually a bit skeptical about any new plastic 9mm, but the SP-21 from Israeli Military Industries is a distinctive looking pistol with several features, both functional and esthetic, that caught my eye. As stated, this is a polymer-framed semiautomatic pistol with a short recoil system that fires both double and single action. Available from Magnum Research in 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP, the test gun is chambered in 9mm.

Some of the pistol's standard features include an ambidextrous, frame-mounted safety, frame mounted slide release lever, thumb-operated magazine release that can be assembled for either right or left hand operation, and an integral rail on the frame for mounting flashlights or laser sights. The pistol comes with two 10-round magazines and an excellent instruction manual.

The grip frame has finger groves, and the front of the trigger guard is flat with horizontal serrations to facilitate a two-

handed combat grip. The top of the gun is extremely interesting in that the slide is round from the muzzle back past the ejection port. A dovetailed front sight is mounted at the muzzle edge of the slide.

Interesting Profile

Over the aft part of the slide, starting just behind the breech face and the front end of the extractor is a round, one-piece polymer cocking grip containing integral, fixed rear sight with the serrated sides flattened to facilitate operating the slide. On the right side of the sighting channel and mounted flush with the flattened top of the cocking grip is the decocker. Simply push down with the off hand thumb to drop the hammer while maintaining your grip with the shooting hand.

Shooting sessions revealed some positives and negatives. On the plus side, the gun had no malfunctions of any kind from the first shot on. There was no break in period;



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Model: SP-21

Caliber: 9mm
(also .40 S&W and .45 ACP)

Weight: 26 ounces

Barrel: 3.9"
polygonal rifling

Sights: 3-dot
(front sight adjustable for windage)

Capacity: 10 rounds
(16 for authorized purchasers)

MSRP: \$499

in fact, the gun was not even cleaned before the first shot — simply wiped off. Ammo included 115-grain JHPs and FMJs from Ultramax and some long nosed FMJ Blazers with aluminum cases. Accuracy at 30 feet was great. Shooting semi-rapid fire and mixing different ammo, it was not difficult to keep all shots inside three inches. But my semi-rapid fire is probably slower than your semi-rapid fire.

There were three negatives. First the slide release lever requires extremely heavy pressure to disengage. It was much easier to pull the slide back and release it to chamber the first round. Second, the magazine design is a bit fragile. An accidental dropping of one magazine on the concrete floor of the indoor firing range sheared off a piece of plastic leaving the magazine in pieces, non-repairable and unusable.

Finally, early in the shooting session when firing the first shot single action, I sometimes caught enough trigger finger flesh between trigger and frame to prevent the gun from firing. This did not happen when firing the gun double action, or when transitioning from double to single action firing, which would be the normal operation of this type weapon. Also, another shooter never experienced this difficulty; it is clearly a function of an individual's grip on the pistol.

With practice (which is always mandatory,) I could confront evil carrying the SP-21. Or, for that matter, I could simply have a lot of fun perforating paper targets.



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OUT OF THE BOX

S&W MODEL 657

By Dick Williams

To the best of my recollection, the .41 Magnum was first presented as the ideal police sidearm and as a not-too-bad hunting caliber if you couldn't handle the .44 Magnum. Even in the days when revolvers ruled, this was both a badly planned marketing move and a terrible misrepresentation of an excellent gun and cartridge.

With all the other stuff cops had to carry on their belts, the N-frame Smith & Wesson was just too heavy and bulky. Fact is, the .41 Magnum is an outstanding hunting cartridge, and an even better choice for S&W double action revolvers than the .44 Magnum as the smaller caliber leaves a bit more metal around the chambers. Smith's new 7½-inch barreled Model 657 seems to acknowledge this.

The gun carries a full length lug under the barrel, sports a non-fluted cylinder for extra mass, and comes with a black, adjustable rear sight and a black ramp front sight that is pinned in place. The front sight is not interchangeable with any other S&W blades.

The .41 has Hogue rubber grips with finger grooves that convert the round-butt grip frame to a square back. I found the square back shape ideal in balancing the gun with its additional muzzle weight. Between the grips and the gun's extra weight, recoil with even the heaviest Buffalo Bore ammunition was manageable, particularly when compared to an equivalent S&W in .44 Magnum. Gloves are nice but not mandatory. I used a pair of unpadded Hatch kevlar gloves for the chronograph session.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Model: 657

Caliber: .41 Magnum

Barrel: 7½

Capacity: 6 rounds

Weight: 52 ounces

Construction: Stainless Steel

Grips: Hogue Rubber

MSRP: \$726

The trigger is wide to facilitate slow, precise shooting in single action mode but has a smooth face in the event double action shooting is required. Average single-action trigger pull on my Lyman digital trigger pull gage was 4 pounds, 6 ounces, but the trigger's large surface area and crisp break made it feel lighter. The gun has the wide, knurled target hammer that is preferred on hunting handguns meant primarily for single action shooting.

Cylinder to frame lock up is the standard two point system used on N-frame Smiths, i.e. one at the front end of the ejector rod and the other in the center of the breech face. The gun features the newer "tear drop" shaped release latch, or thumb-piece, on the left side of the frame. Like all modern Smith and Wessons, the Model 657 has the internal safety lock system that is accessed just above the thumbpiece by the specially provided key.

Running seven different loads from three manufacturers through the gun demonstrated the versatility of this under-appreciated cartridge. Velocities ran from a high of 1,669 fps with Buffalo Bore's 170-grain JHP, to a low of 1,159 fps with Winchester's deep-penetrating 240-grain Platinum Tip. Federal's 210-grain JHP, at 1,307 fps, was the most consistent in terms of shot to shot variation and was the median velocity load. Accuracy was uniformly excellent across the board. Given at the range of bullet weights available in factory ammo, I doubt there are many species you couldn't hunt with the .41 Magnum. This is truly a handgun hunter's revolver chambered in a handgun hunter's caliber. 

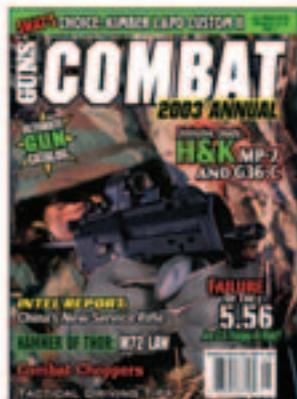


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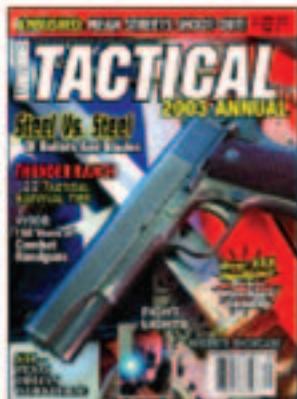
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RANGING SHOTS

continued from page 20

Well on January 8th, 2003, after scouring most of 10,000 acres, Heidi put a 520-grain Brooks flat-point bullet a third of the way up behind the right front leg with an exit through the left front shoulder on the opposite side. The 1400-pound Eland moved about 70 yards because programming told him to. And that was that.

Apparently no matter what continent a game animal comes from, a shot like that leaves a mark. Maybe if you learn your rifle and shoot really well it will be "enough gun?"

"But I Shot Him Really Good!"

If Lady Luck doesn't have red hair she should — and if she does it has to come in a form the likes of Ms. Wanda. Wanda, a Motor City mother of two is quite a conversion. Over the last few years she has gone from, "I'm not sure about this gun thing," to a husband's dream and a bad guy's nightmare. Trust me — she will poke your eye with malice as required.

Part of this transition includes starting to hunt. Well you have to know Wanda like I do and slick that I am, I talked (or tricked) her into going hunting. Well let's go big or stay home; we'll start on the largest land animal in North America, the American Bison!

Well, Wanda's game for the challenge, so it's off to blackpowder rifle school to learn the intricacies of sights and loading etc. Wanda's a sponge, and a smart one at that; so she got it.

Progressing, we sneak up on this bison and she proceeds to shoot this monster five times with a .45-70 over a period of 10 minutes or so due to other bison traffic, milling around and so on. You want to be careful to not shoot two — one is enough work for the day.

So I am watching this bison get hit, and Wanda says to me, "Well I am hitting him good, aren't I?" Why yes Wanda, you are. So after 3,000 grains of lead the big wooly falls down — well sort of — and Wanda shoots him once again and it is in fact over. Funny thing, upon skinning the animal all five projectiles hit the bison a third of the way up behind the front leg and all five holes could be covered by your closed hand. The autopsy showed the heart completely riddled. So maybe you can use "enough gun" and what you are shooting at has never read a book on ballistics.

Shooting at animals (or people for that matter) is sort of like when the doctor gives you medicine. Sometimes the medicine works right away, and then again sometimes the medicine doesn't work right away — or at all. Certainly, you should "use enough gun," but the real secret is to use enough gun well, and even then, be prepared for it not to work as expected.



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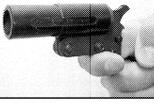
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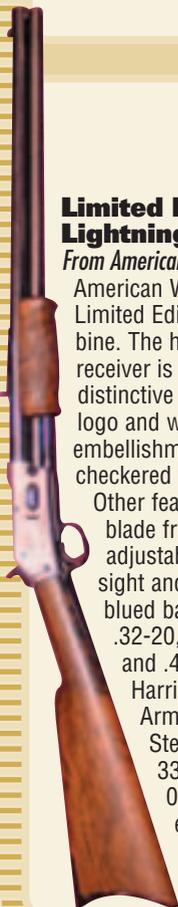
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CAMPFIRE TALES

continued from page 82

aid of glasses. He was also still very active serving as a shooting coach in the Olympics. One of my prized possessions is an autographed picture from him with the two of us together.

At the time he won his Outstanding American Handgunner Award, renowned pistolsmith Jimmy Clark had made arrangements to present him with a new S&W .357 Magnum. When it was shipped to him he had just recently purchased a firearm, and so was caught under the one-gun-a-month fiasco. Col. Walter Walsh, FBI agent, World War II hero, Olympic coach, and 92-year-old gentleman was deemed so dangerous to society by his state of residence he had to wait the required 30 days before he could receive his new sixgun.

The Modern Technique

Col. Jeff Cooper entered my life through the printed word at just the right time, a time I was just starting to become really serious about shooting handguns. The last thing I wanted to do that Saturday morning was to drive my mother to the grocery store. (If only she were still here I would be happy to drive her anywhere.) I expected it to be a couple hours of lost time, however as she shopped I decided to go over to the magazine rack and see if anything was available.

As this was a time when only one gun mag-

azine was being published I didn't expect to find much, but it was too cold to sit out in the car. As I halfheartedly allowed my eyes to travel over the offerings my heart suddenly skipped a beat. There on the bottom shelf was a 75-cent, paperback copy of *Fighting Handguns* by the then unknown to me Jeff Cooper.

I literally devoured that book. I still have it — dog-eared though it may be and held together with masking tape. When I decided to search the Internet for another copy to put away for one of my grandsons, I had to pay slightly more than the original 75 cents, about \$50 worth. Shortly after *Fighting Handguns*, Cooper came out with a very small booklet entitled *Handguns Afield*. Both books gave me considerable knowledge and insight into the use of handguns, both sixguns and semi-automatics.

Col. John D. "Jeff" Cooper probably had more influence on handgunning and self defense using a 1911 Government Model than anyone else during the second half of the 20th century. His thoughts on handguns, scout rifles, politics, and life in general have had a great effect on shooters both nationally and internationally.

He was truly deserving of being named Outstanding American Handgunner. However, when I took over as chairman of the Foundation he had yet to receive the award. My number one hope was to someday present him with the OAH bronze.

My dream was thwarted during my first meeting with him as he refused to accept the nomination. I was convinced that if he were

nominated, he would be voted in by the members of the Foundation. It would be several years before he could be convinced to accept. Normally, the vice president of the Foundation, Bill Jordan, presented the award each year. However, when Col. Cooper won I reserved the right to present the award personally.

I also had the great privilege of spending the evening visiting with this grand gentleman. Every nominee received a miniature trophy and then the actual winner always received the coveted bronze. When Col. Cooper received the bronze he presented me with his miniature, which now commands a special place in my office.

Who Will Follow?

We are very quickly running out of Old Warriors. Col. Askins and Col. Applegate have both gone Home. Col. Cooper is in his 80's and Col. Walsh is in his 90's. We will not see their like again. There is a concerted effort in our society to remove all conditions that breed warriors and make sure that "boys will be boys" is not allowed to happen.

Too often — much too often — young boys are placed on medication if they show any kind of normal boyhood activity in school. There no doubt exists a group of people having as their agenda the total emasculation of the American male. Somehow I can't see Col. Charles Askins, Col. Rex Applegate, Col. Walter Walsh, or Col. Jeff Cooper ever taking sensitivity training.



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CAMPFIRE TALES

BY JOHN TAFFIN

OLD WARRIORS

Col. Charles Askins Jr. not only served his country from World War II through the early days of Vietnam, he was also in the Border Patrol in the 1930s at a time when, as he described it, there was a gun-fight every 10 days. He also hunted big game all over the world and was without a doubt the most controversial gun writer of the 20th century. I am sure in my mind that much of what he wrote was simply designed to be controversial. I also believe he did many things in his life that perhaps needed to be done but shouldn't have been talked about.

In spite of his rough exterior and often combative personality, I found him to be quite the gentleman. My first experience with the Colonel was in the early days of my writing experiences when I was hardly known by anyone let alone other gun writers. During one of the NRA Conventions I found myself with a busload of famous gun writers taking a factory tour. I wound up paired with Col. Askins who had not the slightest idea who I was.

He treated me as if I were a longtime member of the "in-crowd" of the gun writing fraternity. I've never forgotten it, and have always appreciated it to the extent I try to do the same anytime I encounter someone who is trying to become a gun writer.

Applegate Of The O.S.S.

Col. Rex Applegate was one of the original members of the O.S.S. during World War II. After I got to know him he sent me taped copies of the original footage of the training the men went through. It was during this training Col. Applegate wedded himself to a style of self-defense shooting known as point shooting. Until the day he died he stayed with his original theory and always joked about butting heads with those who espoused using the sights in close range defensive situations. Applegate's theory of point shooting was definitely not hip shooting, but rather with the handgun brought up, arm straight, and the handgun "pointed" at the target.

Col. Applegate was not only a colonel in the United States Army, he also held the rank of general in the Mexican Army, spending much of this time south of the border. It was during one of these excursions he used an old S&W "Lemon Squeezer" chambered in .38 Smith & Wesson. It was necessary to empty the little five-shooter on his assailant.

After this experience he was highly responsible for the advent of five-shot S&W's chambered in the more powerful .38 Special cartridge, the hammerless versions in particular. You would expect a man with both of Col. Doug Wesson's original .357 Magnums in his possession to have some pull with Smith & Wesson.

I first met the Colonel when he was one of the nominees for the Outstanding American Handgunner (OAH) Award. When I later visited him at his home and private museum on the Oregon coast, the first two things I found as we entered the museum were his OAH bronze with a .45 Colt New Service Fitz Special revolver leaning against one leg of the bronze. The .45 was engraved "To Rex From Fitz." His two most prized possessions were the first encountered by anyone accorded an invitation into the museum.

Col. Applegate was an authority on riot control and self-defense. He was in his later 80's the last time he found it necessary to employ his methods. Three young would-be toughs tried to mug him outside his hotel. When the police arrived, all three had been knocked silly by the cane in his able hands. It will be a long time before those three try to attack another "defenseless old man."

"That Little Guy?"

Col. Walter Walsh is another true American hero. Born in 1907, Walter Walsh would be one of the FBI agents during the turbulent 1930s. During this time he personally captured Doc Barker, son of the infamous Ma Barker and also the Al Brady gang, being wounded in the process. He also found time to take part in the National Matches shooting both rifle and pistol.

While serving with the FBI, Walsh's favored sidearm was Smith & Wesson's .357 Magnum. He carried this gun with him as a marine in World War II, however he used another favorite handgun, his personal 1911 Government Model .45, to take out a Japanese sniper at 90 yards.

I first encountered Col. Walsh by reading about him in a book by Lucian Cary in the 1950s. I was drawn to a photo of Walsh firing a S&W that was identified as a .38-44 Heavy Duty. I still have that picture and later Col. Walsh would tell me the picture was labeled wrong and it was actually a .357 Magnum.

I would not meet Col. Walsh personally until he was a nominee for the OAH Award. It was my pleasure to write Bill Jordan's speech acknowledging Col. Walsh as the recipient of the coveted bronze trophy.

Bill Jordan also told me a wonderful story about Col. Walsh. During the National Matches a man came up to the easily recognizable 6 foot, 6 inch-tall Jordan and asked him if he could point out Walter Walsh. Jordan said, "that's him on the firing line right now." "That little guy?" responded the inquirer, looking at Col. Walsh at not much over five feet tall. Jordan said to him: "When he is finished shooting go over and look in his eyes." The man did this and returned with: "I see exactly what you mean!"

Col. Walter Walsh was 92 years old when I first met him, still stood ramrod straight as you would expect a marine to stand, and could still see quite well without the

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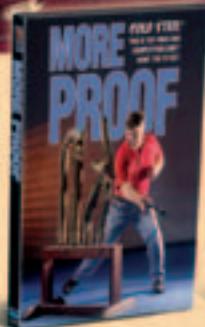
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